



## Broad Street Presbyterian Church

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August 8, 2002

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David A. Van Dyke

Associate Pastors  
Ann R. Palmerton  
Judith M. Hoffhine

Parish Associate  
Deborah A. Lewicki

Director of Music  
Joel A. Mathias

Organist  
James D. Hildreth

Christian Education  
Barbara J. Blanks

Youth Ministries  
Ladd J. Sonnenberg

Business Administrator  
David E. Stamm

Financial Assistant  
Aaron M. Laury

Secretary  
Thele A. Daley

Parish Coordinator  
Sara E. Mosholder

COMPASS Program  
Margaret A. Watson

Food Pantry  
Elizabeth R. Stevens

Infant & Toddler Center  
Valerie L. Lonsinger

Bldg. & Grounds Supervisor  
Maxwell Lawson

Senator Patrick Leahy  
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee  
United States Senate  
433 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Leahy:

I am writing to you about the nomination of Jeffery Sutton to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. I am disappointed that politics is preventing him from receiving a hearing and from the Senate acting on his nomination. But I also write out of my concern over the personal attacks that Mr. Sutton's nomination have brought upon him.

I am currently Jeff's minister and know him very well. He is also my neighbor. The Presbyterian church I pastor, and of which the Suttons are active members, is a large, downtown, socially active congregation, solidly in the liberal wing of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Mr. Sutton is a member of a church, for example, that advocates for the full inclusion of gay and lesbian Christians into the life of the church. He is a member of a congregation that actively opposes the death penalty and is known in Columbus for its work against injustice. And he is a member of a congregation that reaches out to its inner city neighbors through its food pantry that distributes three tons of food each week; that operates one of only a handful of daycare centers in the city accepting Title XX payments; that employs a full time social worker to assist those coming to the church needing aid; and that tutors and mentors approximately 150 school children throughout the

On a personal note as a pastor, I have become very active in my opposition of the death penalty in Ohio. Through my involvement in one particular case, I learned about the plight of another inmate whose court-appointed attorney had literally slept through his trial. I approached Jeff regarding that case and he eagerly accepted it, making it the second death penalty case in which Jeff is currently involved. As a person of deep faith and strong moral character, Jeff Sutton shares my opposition to the death penalty.

I know you have political reasons for opposing Jeff Sutton's confirmation, but as his pastor and friend, I want you to know, from someone who knows him well, that he is not the evil, heartless, insensitive individual he has been made out to be

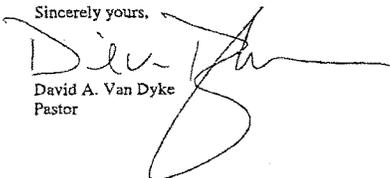
by those who oppose him. Neither is he the ultra-conservative some have characterized him or even as some might assume him to be.

As his pastor, I don't believe I'm breaching confidentiality in sharing a conversation Jeff and I had shortly after his nomination. Jeff told me that he had some major reservations regarding his nomination. He expressed concern over the brutal nomination process. He worried about the substantial pay cut he'd have to take in order to become a judge and about how that would impact his ability to pay for his children's education. But he also spoke about his commitment to the law and to being a good judge as his "calling" in life. He stressed that life was not about making money, but was about doing what one was called to do; making the most of one's unique gifts and abilities. In our conversation he used terms like "duty," "responsibility" and "honor" to describe his decision to accept this nomination. Jeff loves the law and is committed to the high calling of public service. As a pastor, it's wonderful to see conviction, especially when the motives are good and the purpose is admirable.

Jeff Sutton is a very thoughtful and capable attorney and a very bright and gifted legal scholar. He is also a wonderful father and a good husband. He loves his country, his family and his church. Jeff would make an excellent judge, and I write this as an independent who almost always votes for the Democrat on the ticket.

Senator Leahy, thank you for taking the time to read this letter and for all you do for our country. If the Judiciary Committee would grant Jeff Sutton a hearing, you could hear directly from him and not just his detractors. Granting him a hearing would also clear up the cloud of suspicion currently hanging over the judicial process and sending the message to those of us outside the "Beltway" that playing politics and paying back your opponents is more important than getting something accomplished. One other thing for you to consider. If you do grant Jeff Sutton a hearing, you might be pleasantly surprised at the person you meet.

Sincerely yours,

  
David A. Van Dyke  
Pastor