

grant Achievement Award for his outstanding contributions to America and the American legal system. In 1998 he received the District Counsel of the Year Award from the Commissioner of the INS and the Attorney General of the United States. Furthermore, the American Bar Association's Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary unanimously endorsed Judge Der-Yeghiayan as qualified for appointment to the U.S. District Court.

Samuel Der-Yeghiayan earned his BA in 1975 from Evangel University in Springfield, Missouri, where he majored in political science. In 1978 he earned his JD degree from the Franklin Pierce Law Center in Concord, New Hampshire, where he served on the Law Review.

Judge Der-Yeghiayan is a fine man, a distinguished citizen of our State of Illinois, and will be a tremendous asset to the Federal Judiciary.

Mr. Chairman, if I could just ask Judge Der-Yeghiayan and his wife, Becky, who are here in the room with us, to please stand up. There they are in the back.

Senator GRAHAM. Welcome. Thank you for coming.

Senator FITZGERALD. They also have two adult children who are not with us, Tara and Jared. So thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee for your time.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you, Senator Fitzgerald.

Senator Durbin?

PRESENTATION OF SAMUEL DERYEGHIAYAN, NOMINEE TO BE DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS, BY HON. DICK DURBIN, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

Senator DURBIN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and I will be brief. It is no reflection on Judge Der-Yeghiayan's qualifications. But Senator Fitzgerald and I have this bipartisan effort that has been extremely successful in filling every vacancy that has come our way, and this is further evidence of it.

When I had a chance to meet with Judge Der-Yeghiayan, I think what impressed me the most was he had received commendations from the INS, from the Department of Justice, and as Senator Fitzgerald just noted, within the last few months from an organization of immigration lawyers. I think anyone who can earn the trust of both Federal law enforcement as well as immigrant communities, understands the responsibilities of a judge, and that is why I think he is going to be an excellent appointment.

And I think the fact that he is an immigrant is a reminder to all of us, particularly as an immigrant from Middle Eastern background, is a reminder to all of us of the importance of immigration to America. It is the diversity of this Nation which makes it so strong, and Judge Der-Yeghiayan has demonstrated that he has come to our shores and given us a lot. I am sure he will give us more.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator GRAHAM. Thanks, Senator. A very impressive group of nominees we have today.

At this time the Committee would like to recognize Congressmen Doc Hastings and George Nethercutt.

Senator DURBIN. Mr. Chairman, if I could interrupt for a moment? Could I have leave to enter into the record a statement by the ranking Democratic leader, Senator Leahy?

Senator GRAHAM. Without objection.

Senator DURBIN. Thank you.

Senator GRAHAM. Who is the most senior of you all?

Representative NETHERCUTT. You mean by age, chronologically or?

Representative HASTINGS. I am more mature.

Senator GRAHAM. Well, how about Doc Hastings? Congressman Hastings, thank you for coming.

PRESENTATION OF LONNY R. SUKO, NOMINEE TO BE U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON, BY HON. DOC HASTINGS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF WASHINGTON

Representative HASTINGS. Senator Graham and I sometimes have a hard time saying that.

Senator GRAHAM. You are not the only one.

[Laughter.]

Representative HASTINGS. Thank you very much, and Senator Edwards, thank you very much for the courtesy you are showing to me and my colleague from Washington, George Nethercutt, on this issue.

We are pleased to be here to introduce to you, or second if that is the proper protocol, what Senator Murray did in introducing to you Lonny Suko as appointment to the Federal Judge.

He is a constituent of mine. Indeed his office, when he served as a Federal Magistrate, was right across the street from my district office in Yakima, and we had several conversations over the time on different issues. And I was always impressed by how he approached whatever issue we were talking about.

Senator Murray, I think, laid out very well his background, his judicial temperament. The one thing I want to dwell on just a bit here is his most previous role prior to getting this nomination, and that as a Federal Magistrate. As you know, sometimes the job of a magistrate is one that is under the radar, and that work is done pretty much under the radar. But there are two very high-profile cases that he provided over in which there was a settlement, and I think is worth noting today.

One of them involved the Gypsy Church of the Northwest against Spokane City County. It involved more than a million dollars and various activities. The reason I mention that is Spokane is George's hometown. I am about 150 miles from Spokane, but this case raised a very high profile because it went on for some time. While I am not an attorney, I remember that being settled. I have a cousin that is an attorney in Spokane that I think worked on that a little bit, and to have settled that I think was a tremendous accomplishment that probably demonstrated the temperament that Judge Suko brings to this job.

And the other one was one that Senator Murray mentioned regarding the mass shooting at Fairchild Air Force Base, and that involved a settlement of some \$17 million, a numerous number of people.