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Senator Manchin Should Vote “Yes” on Judge Kavanaugh

Last year, when President Trump nominated Judge Neil Gorsuch to the United States Supreme Court, he made good on his campaign promise to nominate justices who would hold the U.S. Constitution above all else. With his recent nomination of Judge Brett Kavanaugh to replace Justice Kennedy, President Trump is continuing his effort to make good by the American public. Now, it is time for Senator Joe Manchin to keep his promise and put West Virginians first by voting to confirm Judge Kavanaugh to the United States Supreme Court.

Judge Kavanaugh is an experienced, intellectual, diligent judge with a fierce loyalty to our constitution as it is written. He has served the public for 25 years and spent 12 years as a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals. Judge Kavanaugh is also a family man, a great contributor to local charities and a faithful congregant at his church. Clearly, Judge Kavanaugh possesses the experience, moral fortitude and reliability required to fulfill a lifetime appointment to our nation’s highest court.

As West Virginia’s Commissioner of Agriculture, I’ve witnessed firsthand how barriers can prevent growth in our agricultural industries. The most notorious have been a result of bureaucratic overreach at the federal level. A prime example of this was when the Environmental Protection Agency unsuccessfully attempted to impose massive fines on West Virginia farmer Lois Alt, and many farmers like her. This was attempted through unlawful implementation of a wide-scale agricultural storm water permitting requirement under the Clean Water Act. In 2015, the EPA again issued a gross overreach with its “Waters of the United States” rule which would have effectively placed agricultural ponds, fields and puddles under the control of the federal agency.

Through a completely voluntary program, West Virginia is leading all other states committed to cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay region. It is evident the states are the best

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entity to manage conservation as seen through West Virginia's efforts. We have shown our farmers and producers will only thrive in an environment that works with, not against them. It is time Washington D.C. puts their needs first. By voting to confirm Judge Kavanaugh, Senator Manchin can send a strong message that overly, burdensome tactics of the Obama-era regulatory state will no longer be tolerated.

Over the years, Judge Kavanaugh has been a strong vote protecting American businesses from illegal job-killing regulations. In fact, Judge Kavanaugh has led the effort to rein in unaccountable agencies, and his decisions have helped kill some of President Obama's most destructive new environmental rules. In all, Judge Kavanaugh has voted to overrule federal agency action 75 times and has rejected the EPA's efforts to impose massive regulations without considering the economic costs of those regulations.

While President Trump has led the charge in rolling back the massive amounts of Obama-era regulation, Judge Kavanaugh's confirmation to the United States Supreme Court will ensure that unelected bureaucrats will not be able to wreak havoc on our state's economy in the future.

For these reasons, I hope Senator Manchin will join me and many other West Virginians in supporting Judge Kavanaugh for the United States Supreme Court.

*Note – Senator Shelley Moore Capito has already expressed support for Judge Kavanaugh

Kent A. Leonhardt
West Virginia Commissioner of Agriculture

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture protects plant, animal and human health through a variety of scientific, regulatory and consumer protection programs. The Commissioner of Agriculture is one of six statewide elected officials who sits on the Board of Public Works.

