

To the Vermont Senate Judiciary Committee:

I urge the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee to vote no on the pending nominations of Michael Drescher and Christina Nolan.

I began my career “reading law” in a Vermont law office in 1985. I was admitted to the Vermont Bar in 1995 and proudly worked for the Vermont Judiciary for 18 years, in the Criminal, Civil and Family Divisions.

This is a frightening time for all Vermonters, but especially the most vulnerable. The individual rights granted by Vermont law and the Vermont Constitution provide a bulwark against the extremism that is currently undermining democratic values in the United States. Because the Vermont Supreme Court is the final arbiter interpreting Vermont law, it is essential that appointees to our highest court understand and fully appreciate the values underlying Vermont law and our Constitution. Vermont Supreme Court justices must have a deep and nuanced knowledge of Vermont precedents that are different from and more protective than federal constitutional law.

Neither nominee has shown a commitment to those Vermont legal values. In fact, by bowing to the dictates of the Trump Department of Justice, in violation of law, both Christina Nolan and Michael Drescher have demonstrated a lack of the integrity and courage required of Vermont Supreme Court justices, especially in these unprecedented times.

Please vote no on both nominees. Neither is fit to serve on the Vermont Supreme Court.

Noam Almeleh
South Burlington, VT 05403