



NARAL

Reproductive Freedom & Choice

Judge Charles W. Pickering, Sr.

Nominated to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit

Career

- U.S. District Court Judge for the Southern District of Mississippi (appointed by President George H. W. Bush), 1990-present.
- Pickering, Williamson and Walters, 1986-90.
- Law Offices of Pickering and Williamson, 1981-86.
- Mississippi State Senate, 1972-80.
- Law Offices of Charles W. Pickering, 1980.
- Law Offices of Pickering and McKenzie, 1973-80.
- Law Offices of Charles W. Pickering, 1971-72.
- Municipal Judge, City of Laurel, Mississippi, 1969.
- Prosecuting Attorney, Jones County, Mississippi, 1964-68.
- Prosecuting Attorney, City of Laurel, Mississippi, 1962.
- Law Offices of Gartin, Hester and Pickering, 1961-70.
- Mississippi Chair, Bush-Quayle campaign, 1988.
- Mississippi Co-Chair, Reagan-Bush campaign, 1980.
- Republican nominee for Mississippi Attorney General, 1979.
- Chairman, Mississippi Republican Party, 1976-1978.
- Chair, Platform Subcommittee on Human Rights and Responsibilities, Republican National Convention, 1976.
- President, Mississippi Baptists, 1983-85.

Hostility to Reproductive Rights

Judge Pickering is the first appellate court nominee of this administration with a clear anti-choice record to have a hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Pickering has long opposed a woman's right to choose, and he also opposed the Equal Rights Amendment.¹ He chaired the Human Rights and Responsibilities Subcommittee of the 1976 National Republican Party Platform Committee that approved a plank to the party platform protesting the Supreme

Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade* and calling for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to ban abortion.²

While serving in the Mississippi Senate, Pickering voted for a resolution calling for a constitutional convention to propose an amendment to ban abortion³ and voted against state funding for family planning programs.⁴

His more recent record on reproductive rights is unexamined; Pickering has published only 95 opinions during his 11 years on the bench in the Southern District of Mississippi. A review of his record on choice is incomplete without an examination of his hundreds of unpublished opinions.

The three states in the Fifth Circuit (Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas) are also governed by anti-choice Houses, Senates, and Governors. Indeed, NARAL estimates that eleven states would move to ban abortion if *Roe v. Wade* were overturned; all three states in the Fifth Circuit are among these states where a woman's right to choose is in the gravest peril. Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas are also states that have been enacting much anti-choice legislation in the recent past. For that reason, judges who fully understand the dimensions of a woman's right to choose are vital; by the same token, judges who have a narrow understanding of the right are a particular danger in those states.

¹ David M. Alpern, Hal Bruno, John J. Lindsey, Thomas M. DeFrank, and Gerald Lubenow, "High Noon," *Newsweek*, Aug. 23, 1976, at 18.

² Richard L. Madden, "G.O.P. Panel Backs Anti-Abortion Plank," *The New York Times*, Aug. 11, 1976, at A1.

³ 1978 MS HCR 3 (Feb. 7, 1979). See also, "Proposal on Abortion Approved," *The Clarion-Ledger*, Feb. 8, 1979.

⁴ 1972 MS SB 1560 (Mar. 31, 1972).