

**Senator Dick Durbin**  
**Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee**  
**Written Questions for Angela Veronica Colmenero**  
**Nominee to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Texas**  
**June 17, 2026**

1. When Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton had to temporarily step aside during his impeachment trial, you served as Provisional Attorney General. Upon his reinstatement, Paxton thanked you “for guiding the agency during my absence.”

From 2015 to 2018, you also served as the Chief of the General Litigation Division under Paxton’s command. Paxton has been indicted on charges of felony securities fraud, and he has been impeached on a bipartisan basis on allegations of bribery, dereliction of duty, obstruction of justice, and abuse of the public’s trust, among other things.

I agree with my colleague Senator Cornyn that Paxton is “unfit for the office.” And although Republicans in the Texas State Senate did not have the courage to oust him, the facts that came out during his trial demonstrated his extensive corrupt conduct.

- a. **Please describe your relationship with Paxton.**

**Response:** I worked in the Texas Attorney General’s Office from 2015 to 2018 during Attorney General Paxton’s first term in office.

- b. **Do you agree with Senator Cornyn and me that Paxton is unfit for office?**

**Response:** As a judicial nominee, it would be improper for me to offer an opinion on a political issue or a statement by a political figure. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canon 5.

2. You have spent most of your career working for right-wing elected officials like Governor Greg Abbott and Attorney General Ken Paxton. But long before you worked for them, you seemed to have had different policy views than those you have spent the last two decades defending.

Prior to attending law school, you worked as a policy analyst for the Mexican American Legislative Caucus, comprised almost exclusively of Democratic elected officials. The group’s policy priorities include access to education, affordable healthcare, and raising the age to purchase an assault rifle to 21.

While you were a law student at Notre Dame, you joined a group of almost 14,000 law students who submitted a brief urging the U.S. Supreme Court in *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003) to affirm a lower court’s ruling that the promotion of diversity in higher education is a compelling governmental interest and that the consideration of race as a factor in admissions determinations is a permissible means of furthering diversity.

**a. Why did you want to join MALC?**

**Response:** I was employed as a policy analyst for MALC during the 2001 Texas Legislative Session. At this time in my life, I was an undergraduate student who was interested in gaining experience in the legislative process.

**b. Please explain what you saw as the importance of MALC's work.**

**Response:** At the time I worked for MALC, it was a bipartisan caucus. I primarily focused on reviewing and summarizing legislation on education matters.

**c. Do you regret signing your name to the aforementioned brief? Please explain why or why not.**

**Response:** I do not recall the circumstances of how my name became associated with this brief that was filed over 20 years ago while I was a student in law school. I did not author the statements that are included in this brief.

**d. Do you continue to believe that diversity in higher education is valuable? Please explain why or why not.**

**Response:** My ethical obligations as a judicial nominee prohibit me from discussing my current policy or political views. Every day, I set aside my own views and advocate the interests of my clients. If I were to be confirmed as a judge, I would likewise set aside any views that I have now or may develop. Additionally, I would faithfully apply binding Supreme Court and Fifth Circuit precedent in all cases that came before me, including precedent concerning the prohibition on race-conscious admissions programs, such as *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*, 600 U.S. 181 (2023).

**e. At what point did your personal views change and what prompted that shift?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 2.d.

- 3.** According to your Questionnaire, you are a board member of the nonprofit Texas Governor's Mansion Greenhouse Project. The latest tax filings indicate your fellow board members are Daniel Hodge, Governor Abbott's former chief of staff and one of Texas's highest-paid lobbyists; and David Whitley, who resigned as Texas's acting secretary of state following his false claim that there were nearly 100,000 suspected noncitizens registered to vote in Texas. You also serve alongside Whitley on the Governor's Mansion Administration Board.

**a. Please describe your relationship with Hodge and Whitley.**

**Response:** Mr. Hodge and Mr. Whitley are former colleagues from the Texas Attorney General’s Office. I have known them in a professional capacity since approximately 2009.

**b. Do you believe Whitley’s debunked assertion that there were 100,000 suspected noncitizens in Texas registered to vote in 2020?**

**Response:** As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to opine on a political issue or a statement by any political figure. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canon 5.

4. Emails obtained by American Oversight via public records requests show that you were “running point” for the State of Texas in its discussion with White House and Department of Homeland Security officials to assist the federal government in detaining undocumented immigrants during the second Trump Administration. In one email to you, the White House’s Director of Interior Enforcement wrote: “We sincerely appreciate your support for the administration’s agenda of expanding our detention portfolio nationwide.”<sup>1</sup>

**Please describe Texas’s collaboration with the Trump Administration on detaining undocumented immigrants and your role in that collaboration.**

**Response:** The email you referenced reflects a conversation that representatives from the Texas Governor’s Office, including myself, had with staff within the federal government about the availability of state property that could be utilized for detention facilities. To the best of my knowledge, the federal government did not pursue use of the available property discussed during the conversation.

5. During your tenure working for Governor Abbott, his administration has taken several controversial positions and actions, including the following: COVID-19 mask mandate prohibition; Operation Lone Star and busing migrants to cities led by Democrats; a directive to the Commissioner of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services to investigate reported instances of “child abuse” where a minor may have received gender affirming procedures or medications; and the creation of the Texas business courts and the 15<sup>th</sup> Court of Appeals.

**a. While working for Governor Abbott have you advised on any of the aforementioned actions? If so, please explain the extent of your involvement.**

**Response:** I consulted with staff in the Office of the Governor and the Governor regarding the issues referenced in Question 5. To the extent this question calls for specific information about my legal work for a client, I cannot divulge those

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<sup>1</sup> Texas Governor’s Office for Communications with Federal Immigration Officials, AMERICAN OVERSIGHT (July 16, 2025), <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/26052578-texas-governors-office-for-communications-with-federal-immigration-officials/>.

details because they are protected by several privileges, including the attorney-client privilege.

- b. Please share any involvement you have had in executive or legislative actions, as well as litigation, related to limiting and prohibiting abortion access in Texas.**

**Response:** I consulted with staff in the Office of the Governor and the Governor on issues concerning the regulation of abortion. I have also consulted with representatives from the Texas Attorney General's Office regarding litigation matters on this topic. To the extent this question calls for specific information about my legal work for a client, I cannot divulge those details because they are protected by several privileges, including the attorney-client privilege.

- c. If confirmed, do you commit to recuse yourself from any cases involving actions that you advised on while working in the Office of the Governor of Texas and the Office of the Texas Attorney General?**

**Response:** The recusal statute requires a federal judge to "disqualify himself in any proceedings in which his impartiality might reasonably be questioned." 28 U.S.C. § 455(a). Subsection (b) then lists additional grounds for recusal, including a specific provision for government attorneys. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will recuse myself from all matters on which I worked on as a lawyer, and I would scrupulously apply the recusal statute, any precedents interpreting it, and any applicable canons of judicial ethics to other matters. I will consult with colleagues and judicial ethics officials as appropriate.

- 6. In your Senate Questionnaire, you described your work as a Campaign Advisor of Texas for Greg Abbott as follows: "I am employed part-time and advise Mr. Abbott on campaign issues."**

**Please explain in detail what campaign issues you advise on.**

**Response:** I primarily provide legal advice on compliance with candidate reporting requirements under state law.

- 7. Did President Trump lose the 2020 election?**

**Response:** Joe Biden was certified as the winner of the 2020 election.

- 8. Where were you on January 6, 2021?**

**Response:** I was working at my office in Austin, Texas.

- 9. Do you denounce the January 6 insurrection?**

**Response:** Trespass and violence occurred at the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, and I categorically condemn violence against law enforcement and political actors. The characterization of the events at the Capitol on January 6, 2021 is a matter of significant political debate. As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to comment further, as issues relating to the events of January 6, 2021, are subject to pending litigation, could come before me if I am confirmed, and are matters of political controversy. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.

**10. Do you believe that January 6 rioters who were convicted of violent assaults on police officers should have been given full and unconditional pardons?**

**Response:** As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to opine on matters of political controversy. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canon 5.

**11. The Justice Department is currently defending the Trump Administration in a number of lawsuits challenging executive actions taken by the Administration. Federal judges—both Republican and Democratic appointees—have enjoined some of these actions, holding that they are illegal or unconstitutional. Alarming, President Trump, his allies, and even some nominees before the Senate Judiciary Committee have responded by questioning whether the executive branch must follow court orders.**

**a. What options do litigants—including the executive branch—have if they disagree with a court order?**

**Response:** Litigants, including executive branch officials, are expected to follow court orders issued in a proceeding to which the litigant is a party. If a litigant disagrees with a judicial order, the normal recourse is to seek reconsideration, to appeal, to seek a stay, or to pursue some combination of those options. Courts have recognized exceptions to the general rule in very narrow circumstances, including for lack of jurisdiction or impossibility. *See, e.g., In re Sawyer*, 124 U.S. 200, 220 (1888) (“Where a court has jurisdiction, it has a right to decide every question which occurs in the cause; and, whether its decision be correct or otherwise, its judgment, until reversed, is regarded as binding in every other court: but, if it act without authority, its judgments and orders are regarded as nullities. They are not voidable, but simply void.”); *United States v. Rylander*, 460 U.S. 752, 757 (1983) (recognizing that parties may not be bound to comply with an order where it is “factually impossible” to do so). The Supreme Court has also recognized that, in some circumstances, it may be necessary for a party to defy a court order to appeal it. *See Mohawk Indus., Inc. v. Carpenter*, 558 U.S. 100, 111 (2009) (“Another long-recognized option is for a party to defy a disclosure order and incur court-imposed sanctions.”).

**b. Do you believe a litigant can ever lawfully defy an order from a lower federal court? If yes, in what circumstances?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 11.a.

- c. Under the separation of powers, which branch of the federal government is responsible for determining whether a federal court order is lawful?**

**Response:** The judicial branch is responsible for determining whether a federal court order is lawful.

- 12. District judges have occasionally issued non-party injunctions, which may include “nationwide injunctions” and “universal injunctions.”**

- a. Are non-party injunctions constitutional?**

**Response:** In *Trump v. CASA*, 606 U.S. 831 (2025), the Supreme Court held that injunctions awarding relief to non-parties are impermissible. The Court did not reach the question of whether such injunctions are constitutional. If confirmed, I would follow all applicable precedent, including *CASA* and any Fifth Circuit precedent addressing the constitutional issue. Under the Code of Conduct for United States Judges, it would be inappropriate for me to weigh in further on the constitutional question as the issue could come before me if I am confirmed and may also be subject to pending litigation. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canon 3(A)(6).

- b. Are non-party injunctions a legitimate exercise of judicial power?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 12.a.

- c. Is it ever appropriate for a district judge to issue a non-party injunction? If so, under what circumstances is it appropriate?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 12.a.

- d. As a litigator, have you ever sought a non-party injunction as a form of relief? If so, please list each matter in which you have sought such relief.**

**Response:** Yes. *See Texas v. United States*, 86 F. Supp. 3d 591 (S.D. Tex. 2015), *aff'd*, 809 F.3d 134 (5th Cir. 2015), *aff'd by an equally divided court*, 579 U.S. 547 (2016).

- 13. At any point during your selection process, did you have any discussions with anyone—including individuals at the White House, the Justice Department, or any outside groups—about loyalty to President Trump? If so, please provide details.**

**Response:** No.

- 14. Does the U.S. Constitution permit a president to serve three terms?**

**Response:** The Twenty-Second Amendment states: “No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice.”

**15.** On May 26, 2025, in a Truth Social post, President Trump referred to some judges whose decisions he disagrees with, as “USA HATING JUDGES” and “MONSTERS”, who “...SUFFER FROM AN IDEOLOGY THAT IS SICK, AND VERY DANGEROUS FOR OUR COUNTRY...”<sup>2</sup>

**a. Do you agree that these federal judges are “USA HATING” and “MONSTERS” who “...SUFFER FROM AN IDEOLOGY THAT IS SICK, AND VERY DANGEROUS FOR OUR COUNTRY...”?**

**Response:** As a judicial nominee, it would be improper for me to offer an opinion on a political issue or a statement by a political figure. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canon 5.

**b. Do you believe this rhetoric endangers the lives of judges and their families?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 15.a.

**16.** In addition to the President’s own attacks on judges, his adviser Stephen Miller took to social media to call a federal trade court’s ruling against President Trump’s tariffs a “judicial coup”<sup>3</sup> and later reposted the images of the three judges who decided the case and wrote, “we are living under a judicial tyranny.”<sup>4</sup>

**a. Do you agree that these judges are engaged in a “judicial coup” and that “we are living under a judicial tyranny”?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 15.a.

**b. Do you believe this rhetoric endangers the lives of judges and their families?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 15.a.

**c. Would you feel comfortable with any politician or their adviser sharing a picture of you on social media if you issue a decision they disagree with?**

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<sup>2</sup> Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump), TRUTH SOCIAL (May 26, 2025, 7:22 AM), <https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/114573871728757682>.

<sup>3</sup> Stephen Miller (@StephenM), X, (May 28, 2025, 7:48 PM), <https://x.com/StephenM/status/1927874604531409314>.

<sup>4</sup> Stephen Miller (@StephenM), X, (May 29, 2025, 8:25 AM), <https://x.com/StephenM/status/1928065122657845516>.

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 15.a.

**17. When, if ever, may a lower court depart from Supreme Court precedent?**

**Response:** It is never appropriate for a lower court to depart from Supreme Court precedent.

**18. When, in your opinion, would it be appropriate for a circuit court to overturn its own precedent?**

**Response:** The decision to overturn circuit court precedent resides with the judges of that circuit who may convene *en banc*. If confirmed as a district court judge, I would have no role in that decision.

**19. When, in your opinion, would it be appropriate for the Supreme Court to overrule its own precedent?**

**Response:** The decision to overrule Supreme Court precedent resides with the justices of the Supreme Court. If confirmed as a district court judge, I would have no role in that decision.

**20. Please answer yes or no as to whether the following cases were correctly decided by the Supreme Court:**

**a. *Brown v. Board of Education***

**Response:** Yes. Although it is generally inappropriate for a judicial nominee to offer a view on whether any Supreme Court precedent was correctly decided, numerous previous nominees have made exceptions for two of the above cases: *Brown v. Board of Education* and *Loving v. Virginia*. Consistent with that approach, I believe it is appropriate to offer my view that both *Brown* and *Loving* were correctly decided. If confirmed, I would faithfully apply all binding Supreme Court precedent.

**b. *Plyler v. Doe***

**Response:** *Plyer* is binding Supreme Court precedent. If confirmed, I would faithfully apply it.

**c. *Loving v. Virginia***

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 20.a.

**d. *Griswold v. Connecticut***

**Response:** *Griswold* is binding Supreme Court precedent. If confirmed, I would faithfully apply it.

**e. *Trump v. United States***

**Response:** *Trump v. United States* is binding Supreme Court precedent. If confirmed, I would faithfully apply it.

**f. *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization***

**Response:** *Dobbs* is binding Supreme Court precedent. If confirmed, I would faithfully apply it.

**g. *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association, Inc. v. Bruen***

**Response:** *Bruen* is binding Supreme Court precedent. If confirmed, I would faithfully apply it.

**h. *Obergefell v. Hodges***

**Response:** *Obergefell* is binding Supreme Court precedent. If confirmed, I would faithfully apply it.

**i. *Bostock v. Clayton County***

**Response:** *Bostock* is binding Supreme Court precedent. If confirmed, I would faithfully apply it.

**j. *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado***

**Response:** *Masterpiece Cakeshop* is binding Supreme Court precedent. If confirmed, I would faithfully apply it.

**k. *303 Creative LLC v. Elenis***

**Response:** *303 Creative* is binding Supreme Court precedent. If confirmed, I would faithfully apply it.

**l. *United States v. Rahimi***

**Response:** *Rahimi* is binding Supreme Court precedent. If confirmed, I would faithfully apply it.

**m. *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo***

**Response:** *Loper Bright* is binding Supreme Court precedent. If confirmed, I would faithfully apply it.

**21. With respect to constitutional interpretation, do you believe judges should rely on the “original meaning” of the Constitution?**

**Response:** With respect to constitutional interpretation, lower court judges should first look to binding precedent. If there is no applicable binding precedent, lower court judges should follow the methods of constitutional interpretation as established by the Supreme Court, with an emphasis on the original meaning of the constitutional provision at issue.

**22. How do you decide when the Constitution’s “original meaning” should be controlling?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 21.

**23. Does the “original meaning” of the Constitution support a constitutional right to same-sex marriage?**

**Response:** In *Obergefell v. Hodges*, the Supreme Court recognized a constitutional right to same-sex marriage.

**24. Does the “original meaning” of the Constitution support the constitutional right to marry persons of a different race?**

**Response:** In *Loving v. Virginia*, the Supreme Court recognized a constitutional right to marry persons of a different race.

**25. What is your understanding of the Equal Protection and Due Process clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment?**

**Response:** The Equal Protection Clause states that no State shall “deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the law.” U.S. Const. amend. XIV, § 1. The Supreme Court has construed this Clause to prohibit government action classifying individuals based on protected characteristics unless the law satisfies the appropriate level of scrutiny. *See, e.g., Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*, 600 U.S. 181 (2023) (strict scrutiny for race-based classifications); *United States v. Virginia*, 518 U.S. 515 (1996) (intermediate scrutiny for sex-based classifications). “[I]f a law neither burdens a fundamental right nor targets a suspect class, [courts] will uphold the legislative classification so long as it bears a rational relation to some legitimate end.” *United States v. Skrametti*, 605 U.S. 495, 510 (2025) (quoting *Romer v. Evans*, 518 U.S. 620, 631 (1996)).

The Due Process Clause states that no State shall “deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law.” U.S. Const. amend. XIV, § 1. The Supreme Court has construed this Clause to include both a procedural and a substantive component. The

procedural component, referred to as procedural due process, requires affording certain basic procedural protections before government action can deprive a person of life, liberty, or property. *See, e.g., Matthews v. Eldridge*, 424 U.S. 319 (1976). The substantive component protects substantive rights that are “objectively, deeply rooted in this Nation’s history and tradition.” *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Org.*, 597 U.S. 215, 239 (2022) (quoting *Washington v. Glucksberg*, 521 U.S. 702, 721 (1997)).

**26. How do these clauses apply to individuals that the Framers of the amendment likely did not have in mind, such as women? Or LGBTQ+ individuals?**

**Response:** The Supreme Court has held that sex-based classifications receive intermediate scrutiny. This means that “the State must show that the [sex-based] classification serves important governmental objectives and that the discriminatory means employed are substantially related to the achievement of those objectives.” *United States v. Skrametti*, 605 U.S. 495, 510 (2025). The Supreme Court has applied the Due Process Clause and the Equal Protection Clause to cases involving discrimination based on sexual orientation. *See, e.g., Obergefell v. Hodges*, 576 U.S. 644 (2015); *Lawrence v. Texas*, 539 U.S. 558 (2003); *Romer v. Evans*, 517 U.S. 620 (1996).

**27. Do you believe that judges should be “originalist” and adhere to the original public meaning of constitutional provisions when applying those provisions today?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 21.

**28. If so, do you believe that courts should adhere to the original public meaning of the Foreign Emoluments Clause when interpreting and applying the Clause today?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 21.

**29. Under the U.S. Constitution, who is entitled to First Amendment protections?**

**Response:** The Supreme Court has held that the First Amendment protects individuals, corporations, and speech. If confirmed, I would faithfully apply binding Supreme Court and Fifth Circuit precedent involving the First Amendment.

**30. How would you determine whether a law that regulates speech is “content-based” or “content-neutral”? What are some of the key questions that would inform your analysis?**

**Response:** The Supreme Court has stated that a “a law is content based on its face if it applies to particular speech because of the topic discussed or the idea or message expressed.” *TikTok Inc. v. Garland*, 604 U.S. 56, 70 (2025) (cleaned up). A law is content-neutral if it can be “justified without reference to the content of the regulated speech.” *Reed v. Town of Gilbert*, 576 U.S. 155, 166 (2015). If confirmed, I will faithfully follow all binding Supreme Court and Fifth Circuit precedent addressing the First Amendment.

**31. What is the standard for determining whether a statement is protected speech under the true threats doctrine?**

**Response:** The Supreme Court has held that the First Amendment does not protect true threats, “serious expressions conveying that a speaker means to commit an act of unlawful violence,” *Counterman v. Colorado*, 600 U.S. 66, 74 (2023), under a recklessness standard, *id.* at 79–82.

**32. Is every individual within the United States entitled to due process?**

**Response:** The Supreme Court has held that “all ‘persons’ within the United States, including aliens, whether their presence here is lawful, unlawful, temporary, or permanent” are entitled to certain levels of due process. *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 693 (2001). To the extent this question asks about hypothetical cases or matters that are the subject of ongoing litigation, it would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to comment further. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canon 3(A)(6).

**33. Can U.S. citizens be transported to other countries for the purpose of being detained, incarcerated, or otherwise penalized?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 32.

**34. The Fourteenth Amendment states: “All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside.”**

**a. Is every person born in the United States a citizen under the Fourteenth Amendment?**

**Response:** I am aware that the above question has been the subject of recent litigation. As a result, this question calls for a response that could be seen as opining on political matters or potential future cases, and I cannot provide such an answer consistent with my ethical obligations as a judicial nominee. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.

**b. Is the citizenship or immigration status of the parents of an individual born in the United States relevant for determining whether the individual is a citizen under the Fourteenth Amendment?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 34.a.

**35. Do you believe that demographic and professional diversity on the federal bench is important? Please explain your views.**

**Response:** It is never appropriate for someone to be denied an opportunity to serve as a judge based on race, ethnicity, sex, religion, or any other protected characteristic. It is valuable for the federal bench to benefit from a wide variety of professional experiences.

36. The bipartisan *First Step Act of 2018*, which was signed into law by President Trump, is one of the most important pieces of criminal justice legislation to be enacted during my time in Congress. At its core, the Act was based on a few key, evidence-based principles. First, incarcerated people can and should have meaningful access to rehabilitative programming and support in order to reduce recidivism and help our communities prosper. Second, overincarceration through the use of draconian mandatory minimum sentences does not serve the purposes of sentencing and ultimately causes greater, unnecessary harm to our communities. With these rehabilitative principles in mind, one thing Congress sought to achieve through this Act was giving greater discretion to judges—both before and after sentencing—to ensure that the criminal justice system effectively and efficiently fosters public safety for the benefit of all Americans.

**a. How do you view the role of federal judges in implementing the *First Step Act*?**

**Response:** The role of a federal judge is to faithfully interpret the law and apply it fairly and impartially to the facts of the case before him or her.

**b. Will you commit to fully and fairly considering the individualized circumstances of each defendant who comes before you when imposing sentences to ensure that they are properly tailored to promote the goals of sentencing and avoid terms of imprisonment in excess of what is necessary?**

**Response:** If confirmed, I will follow all applicable laws governing sentencing determinations, including 18 U.S.C. § 3553.

37. The Federalist Society seeks to “reorder[] priorities within the legal system to place a premium on individual liberty, traditional values, and the rule of law.”

**a. In your Questionnaire, you state that you are currently or were previously a member of the Federalist Society. What is your understanding of “traditional values”?**

**Response:** I am not familiar with that statement or its context, and am unsure of its meaning.

**b. President Trump wrote on Truth Social that the Federalist Society gave him “bad advice” on “numerous Judicial Nominations.” He also wrote that Leonard Leo is a “sleazebag” who “probably hates America.” If you are not familiar with this post, please refer to it in the footnote.<sup>5</sup>**

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<sup>5</sup> Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump), TRUTH SOCIAL (May 29, 2025, 8:10 PM), <https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/114593880455063168>.

- i. Do you agree with President Trump that the Federalist Society provided President Trump with bad advice during his first term? Why or why not?**

**Response:** As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to opine on a political issue or a statement by any elected official or political figure. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canon 5.

- ii. Do you agree with President Trump that Leo is a sleazebag who probably hates America? Why or why not?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 37.b.i.

- iii. If you are confirmed, do you plan to remain affiliated with the Federalist Society?**

**Response:** If confirmed, I would evaluate all my associations and memberships for consistency with 28 U.S.C. § 455, the Code of Conduct for United States Judges, and any and all other laws, rules, and practices governing such circumstances.

- c. During your selection process, have you spoken to or corresponded with any individuals associated with the Federalist Society, including Leonard Leo or Steven G. Calabresi? If so, please provide details of those discussions.**

**Response:** I have not spoken to or corresponded with Mr. Leo or Mr. Calabresi. I have several friends and acquaintances associated with the Federalist Society in Texas. I have spoken to a few of those individuals generally about my application and the selection process.

- d. Have you ever been asked to and/or provided services to the Federalist Society, including research, analysis, advice, speeches, or appearing at events?**

**Response:** No.

- e. Have you ever been paid honoraria by the Federalist Society? If so, how much were you paid, and for what services?**

**Response:** No.

- 38.** The Teneo Network states that its purpose is to “Recruit, Connect, and Deploy talented conservatives who lead opinion and shape the industries that shape society.”

- a. During your selection process, have you spoken to or corresponded with any individuals associated with the Teneo Network, including Leonard Leo? If so, please provide details of those discussions.**

**Response:** I have not spoken to or corresponded with Mr. Leo. I have several friends and acquaintances associated with the Teneo Network in Texas. I have spoken to a few of those individuals generally about my application and the selection process.

- b. Have you ever been asked to and/or provided services to the Teneo Network, including research, analysis, advice, speeches, or appearing at events?**

**Response:** No.

- c. Have you ever been paid honoraria by the Teneo Network? If so, how much were you paid, and for what services?**

**Response:** No.

- 39.** The Heritage Foundation states that its mission is to “formulate and promote public policies based on the principles of free enterprise, limited government, individual freedom, traditional American values, and a strong national defense.” Heritage Action, which is affiliated with the Heritage Foundation, seeks to “fight for conservative policies in Washington, D.C. and in state capitals across the country.”

- a. During your selection process, have you spoken to or corresponded with any individuals associated with the Heritage Foundation or Heritage Action, including Kevin D. Roberts? If so, please provide details of those discussions.**

**Response:** Not to my knowledge.

- b. Have you ever been asked to and/or provided services to the Heritage Foundation or Heritage Action, including research, analysis, advice, speeches, or appearing at events?**

**Response:** No.

- c. Were you ever involved in or asked to contribute to Project 2025 in any way?**

**Response:** No.

- d. Have you ever been paid honoraria by the Heritage Foundation or Heritage Action? If so, how much were you paid, and for what services?**

**Response:** No.

**40.** The America First Policy Institute (AFPI) states that its “guiding principles are liberty, free enterprise, national greatness, American military superiority, foreign-policy engagement in the American interest, and the primacy of American workers, families, and communities in all we do.”

- a. During your selection process, have you spoken to or corresponded with any individuals associated with AFPI? If so, please provide details of those discussions.**

**Response:** Not to my knowledge.

- b. Have you ever been asked to and/or provided services to AFPI, including research, analysis, advice, speeches, or appearing at events?**

**Response:** No.

- c. Have you ever been paid honoraria by AFPI? If so, how much were you paid, and for what services?**

**Response:** No.

**41.** The America First Legal Institute (AFLI) states that it seeks to “oppose the radical left’s anti-jobs, anti-freedom, anti-faith, anti-borders, anti-police, and anti-American crusade.”

- a. During your selection process, have you spoken to or corresponded with any individuals associated with AFLI, including Stephen Miller, Gene Hamilton, or Daniel Epstein? If so, please provide details of those discussions.**

**Response:** Not to my knowledge.

- b. Have you ever been asked to and/or provided services to AFLI, including but not limited to research, analysis, advice, speeches, or appearing at events?**

**Response:** No.

- c. Have you ever been paid honoraria by AFLI? If so, how much were you paid, and for what services?**

**Response:** No.

**42.** The Article III Project is an organization which claims that, “The left is weaponizing the power of the judiciary against ordinary citizens.”

- a. During your selection process, have you spoken to or corresponded with any individuals associated with the Article III Project, including Mike Davis, Will**

**Chamberlain, or Josh Hammer? If so, please provide details of those discussions.**

**Response:** Not to my knowledge.

- b. Have you ever been asked to and/or provided services to the Article III Project, including research, analysis, advice, speeches, or appearing at events?**

**Response:** No.

- c. Have you ever been paid honoraria by the Article III Project? If so, how much were you paid, and for what services?**

**Response:** No.

- 43. The Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) states that it is “the world’s largest legal organization committed to protecting religious freedom, free speech, the sanctity of life, marriage and family, and parental rights.”**

- a. During your selection process, have you spoken to or corresponded with any individuals associated with ADF? If so, please provide details of those discussions.**

**Response:** I have several friends and acquaintances associated with ADF. I have spoken to a few of those individuals generally about my application and the selection process.

- b. Have you ever been asked to and/or provided services to ADF, including research, analysis, advice, speeches, or appearing at events?**

**Response:** No.

- c. Have you ever been paid honoraria by ADF? If so, how much were you paid, and for what services?**

**Response:** No.

- 44. The Concord Fund, also known as the Judicial Crisis Network, states that it is committed “to the Constitution and the Founders’ vision of a nation of limited government; dedicated to the rule of law; with a fair and impartial judiciary.” It is affiliated with the 85 Fund, also known as the Honest Elections Project and the Judicial Education Project.**

- a. During your selection process, have you spoken to or corresponded with any individuals associated with these organizations, including Leonard Leo or Carrie Severino? If so, please provide details of those discussions.**

**Response:** Not to my knowledge.

- b. Have you ever been asked to and/or provided services to these organizations, including research, analysis, advice, speeches, or appearing at events?**

**Response:** No.

- c. Have you ever been paid honoraria by these organizations? If so, how much were you paid, and for what services?**

**Response:** No.

- d. Do you have any concerns about outside groups or special interests making undisclosed donations to front organizations like the Concord Fund or 85 Fund in support of your nomination? Note that I am not asking whether you have solicited any such donations, I am asking whether you would find such donations to be problematic.**

**Response:** I am unaware of any such donations being made in support of my nomination. To the extent this question calls for a response to offer an opinion on political matters, I cannot provide such an answer consistent with my ethical obligations as a judicial nominee. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canon 5.

- e. If you learn of any such donations, will you commit to call for the undisclosed donors to make their donations public so that if you are confirmed you can have this information when you make decisions about recusal in cases that these donors may have an interest in?**

**Response:** Impartiality and the appearance of impartiality are important in maintaining the public's confidence in the judicial system. If confirmed, I will consult the relevant canons and rules to determine whether a conflict of interest exists that requires recusal. To the extent this question calls for a response to offer an opinion on political matters, I cannot provide such an answer consistent with my ethical obligations as a judicial nominee. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canon 5.

- f. Will you condemn any attempt to make undisclosed donations to the Concord Fund or 85 Fund on behalf of your nomination?**

**Response:** Please see my answers to Questions 44.d and 44.e.

**Nomination of Angela Colmenero  
Nominee to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas  
Questions for the Record  
Submitted June 17, 2026**

**QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR WHITEHOUSE**

**Please answer each question and sub-question individually and as specifically as possible.**

1. While working as Provisional Attorney General of Texas, you defended Texas’s abortion ban, which prohibits an abortion in any case with an exception only if the pregnant woman is at risk of death or substantial impairment of a major bodily function.
  - a. Does the U.S. Constitution protect interstate travel to access abortion?

**Response:** In *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Org.*, 597 U.S. 215 (2022), the Supreme Court held that the federal Constitution does not protect a right to an abortion and returned the authority to regulate abortion to the states. Because this question asks about an issue that could come before me if I am confirmed, that may be involved in pending litigation, and that is a matter of political controversy, it would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to comment further. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.

2. Have you ever spoken with the following individuals or groups about your nomination? If so, please describe the conversation(s) with specificity.

- a. Leonard Leo?

**Response:** No.

- b. Anyone affiliated with an entity led or funded by Leonard Leo?

**Response:** To the best of my knowledge, no.

- c. Carrie Severino?

**Response:** No.

- d. Mike Davis?

**Response:** No.

- e. Anyone affiliated with The Article III Project?

**Response:** To the best of my knowledge, no.

Senate Judiciary Committee  
Hearing on  
Nominations  
June 10, 2026  
Questions for the Record  
Senator Amy Klobuchar

**For Angela Colmenero, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Texas**

You were counsel of record in a case that defended Texas’s restrictive abortion law. One of the plaintiffs in that case, Amanda Zurawski, appeared before the Senate Judiciary Committee and testified about how this law prevented her health care team from appropriately intervening, and as a result, she was forced to carry her stillborn daughter, Willow, to term, went into septic shock and suffered permanent physical damage.

- When filing its appeal, your office stated “Protecting the health of mothers and babies is of paramount importance to the people of Texas.” What do you say to women like Ms. Zurawski who have had their health significantly harmed by the law you defended?

**Response:** The appellate brief you referenced above was filed in a case where the Texas Attorney General’s Office had a duty to zealously represent the interests of the State and State defendants in litigation. While all former litigators have records of previous advocacy positions, it is incumbent on every judge to put aside his or her personal beliefs and previous clients, and instead to apply the law fairly and faithfully, without regard to persons, prejudice, or politics. If confirmed, I would do so in every case. To the extent this question calls for a response expressing an opinion on a political or legal issue, it would be inappropriate for me to offer a view. *See Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.*

You defended Texas’s legislative maps in cases alleging that the maps violated Section 2 of the *Voting Rights Act*. A panel of judges ruled that the map-drawers “turned the *Voting Rights Act* on its head,” by “intentionally us[ing] it to undermine Latino voting opportunity.”

- What is your understanding of the Supreme Court’s jurisprudence with respect to Section 2 of the *Voting Rights Act*, particularly after *Louisiana v. Callais*, and Congress’ ability to pass legislation to protect the rights of all eligible Americans to vote?

**Response:** In *Louisiana v. Callais*, 146 S. Ct. 1131 (2026), the Supreme Court updated the standards for liability under § 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 as established by *Thornburg v. Gingles*, 478 U.S. 30 (1986). Specifically, for a plaintiff to satisfy the first *Gingles* precondition, a plaintiff’s alternative map must account for “all the State’s legitimate districting objectives” and “cannot use race as a criterion” in preparing the alternative map. *Id.* at 1159. To prove the second and third preconditions, a plaintiff “must provide an analysis that controls for party affiliation” and “show that voters engage in racial bloc voting that cannot be explained by partisan affiliation.” *Id.* To the extent this question calls for a response expressing an opinion on a matter of public policy or political controversy, it would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to discuss such matters. *See Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canon 5.*

**Nomination of Angela Colmenero  
to the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas  
Questions for the Record  
Submitted June 17, 2026**

**QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR COONS**

1. Do you believe that the Senate Judiciary Committee has a responsibility to evaluate judicial nominees to the best of its ability, including by asking questions on the record to make each nominee's unique background and viewpoint clear to the American people?

**Response:** Yes.

2. Do you believe that you, as a judicial nominee, have a responsibility to the American people to give full and complete answers to the Committee's questions to the best of your ability and in good faith?

**Response:** Yes.

3. Do you believe you fulfilled this responsibility with the answers you have provided to my questions for the record?

**Response:** I have done my best to fulfill that responsibility.

- a. Did you receive assistance from staff in the White House, the Department of Justice, or any other organization in writing your responses to these questions? If so, from whom did you receive assistance and what was the nature of the assistance you received?

**Response:** I prepared these responses on my own, and consulted my records, case law, statutory provisions, the Constitution, and previous Questions for the Record submissions in doing so. After receiving feedback from persons at the Office of Legal Policy at the U.S. Department of Justice, I finalized my answers and approved them to be submitted to the Committee.

- b. Do you believe it is appropriate for a nominee to answer my questions for the record with the verbatim answers of previous nominees who answered the same questions?

**Response:** Yes, if the response fully and accurately reflects the nominee's views on the topic.

- c. Did you review the answers to my questions for the record submitted by previous judicial nominees before answering these questions?

**Response:** Yes.

- d. To your knowledge, are any of your answers to these questions for the record exact duplicates of answers provided by previous nominees?

**Response:** Yes.

4. At any point during the process that led to your nomination, did you make any representations or commitments to anyone—including but not limited to individuals at the White House, at the Justice Department, or at outside groups—as to how you would handle a particular case or matter if confirmed? If so, explain fully.

**Response:** No.

- a. At any point during the process that led to your nomination, were you asked about your opinion on any cases that involve President Trump or the Trump administration?

**Response:** No.

5. When it comes to conducting yourself ethically, who in the legal profession do you see as a role model?

**Response:** After graduating from law school, I had the honor to serve as a judicial law clerk to the Honorable Allen Joe Fish of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas. This experience was profoundly formative to me as a young attorney, and he remains a role model for me today.

6. How would you describe your judicial philosophy?

**Response:** If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, my judicial philosophy would be to faithfully and fully carry out the Article III duties of a judge on an “inferior court” to the “one [S]upreme Court.” *See* U.S. Const. art. III. As a district court judge, I would faithfully apply all binding precedent from the Supreme Court and the Fifth Circuit. To the extent there is no binding precedent, I would endeavor to use the modes of judicial reasoning set forth by the Supreme Court, particularly textualism and originalism.

7. With respect to substantive due process, what factors do you look to when a case requires you to determine whether a right is fundamental and protected under the Fourteenth Amendment?

**Response:** If I were confirmed, I would faithfully apply the standards set forth in all binding Supreme Court and Fifth Circuit precedent.

- a. Would you consider whether the right is expressly enumerated in the Constitution?

**Response:** Yes.

- b. Would you consider whether the right is deeply rooted in this nation’s history and tradition? If so, what types of sources would you consult to determine whether a right is deeply rooted in this nation’s history and tradition?

**Response:** Yes. The Supreme Court in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Org.*, instructed that fundamental rights are those rights that are “objectively, deeply rooted in this Nation’s history and tradition.” 597 U.S. 215, 239 (2022) (quoting *Washington v. Glucksberg*, 521 U.S. 702, 721 (1997)). I would faithfully apply this precedent and any other binding precedent.

- c. Would you consider whether the right has previously been recognized by Supreme Court or circuit precedent? What about the precedent of another court of appeals?

**Response:** If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I would be bound by any precedent of the Supreme Court or the Fifth Circuit that recognized a fundamental right. Precedent from another court of appeals could be considered for its persuasive authority, but could not overcome binding precedent from the Supreme Court or the Fifth Circuit.

- d. Would you consider whether a *similar* right has previously been recognized by Supreme Court or circuit precedent?

**Response:** Yes.

- e. What other factors would you consider?

**Response:** If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I would consider the factors set forth in applicable binding precedent, including *Dobbs*.

8. If you concluded that the President had violated his constitutional duty to faithfully execute the laws and then had to determine the remedy, what process would you use to perform that analysis? I assume you would faithfully follow binding precedent, but what specific precedents and/or other sources of law would you look to?

**Response:** The Constitution requires the President to “take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed.” U.S. Const. art. II, § 3, cl. 5. The President is also authorized to “decide ‘how to prioritize and how aggressively to pursue legal actions against defendants who violate the law.’” *United States v. Texas*, 599 U.S. 670, 678 (2023) (quoting *TransUnion LLC v. Ramirez*, 594 U.S. 413, 429 (2021)). How these constitutional powers and authorities apply to presidential action is a matter of ongoing dispute and implicates issues that could come before me as a judge if I am confirmed. As a result, as a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to comment further. See Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canon 3(A)(6).

9. The 22<sup>nd</sup> Amendment states: “No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice.”

a. Was President Trump elected to the office of the President twice?

**Response:** Congress certified Donald Trump as the winner of the election in 2016 and 2024. As a result, he has been elected to the office of President twice.

b. If President Trump were elected again in 2028, how many times in total would he have been elected to the office of the President?

**Response:** Three.

c. Is President Trump eligible to be elected President for a third term in 2028?

**Response:** No. The Twenty-Second Amendment states that no person may be “elected to the office of the President” for a third term. *See* U.S. Const. amend. XXII.

10. If Congress certifies a candidate as being the winner of a presidential election, does that mean that the candidate won the election? If not, what does it mean?

**Response:** When Congress certifies a candidate as winning the electoral college, that means the candidate is elected President of the United States.

11. At your Senate Judiciary Committee nomination hearing, Senator Blumenthal asked you who won the 2020 election. You replied that “as a matter of law, Joe Biden won the 2020 election.”

a. What does it mean to win an election “as a matter of law”?

**Response:** The Constitution outlines the legal framework for electing the President and certifying the results of an election. An individual wins an election as a matter of law when the constitutional requirements are satisfied.

b. What is the difference between winning an election and winning an election “as a matter of law”?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 11.a.

c. Senator Blumenthal then asked you who got more popular votes in the 2020 election. You replied, “similar to my fellow nominees, I’m here also to speak about the law, and as a matter of law, Joe Biden won the 2020 election.” Senator Blumenthal then asked you again who won more votes, and you replied, “well, Joe Biden received more electoral votes.” Why did you answer who got more electoral college votes but not who won the popular vote?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 11.a.

- d. In advance of the hearing, did you prepare a potential answer or set of answers to question(s) you might receive related to who won the 2020 election? If so, what information or sources did you use to develop your answer(s)? If not, please explain how you, without any outside input, made the decision to reply with who won “as a matter of law” when asked about who won the 2020 election.

**Response:** I reviewed the Constitution and Supreme Court opinions. I also reviewed answers of previous nominees and the Code of Conduct for United States Judges, which states that judges and nominees should not weigh in on matters of political controversy and public debate. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canon 5.

- e. Prior to the hearing, did anyone instruct, suggest, imply, or otherwise represent that you should avoid directly stating, without qualification, who won the 2020 election?

**Response:** No.

- f. Do you believe that you would face any adverse professional consequences if you directly stated, during your hearing or otherwise on the record, that President Trump lost the 2020 election, or that President Biden won the 2020 election? Please explain.

**Response:** No.

12. The *New York Times* reported that on March 25, 2026, President Trump stated the following at a National Republican Congressional Committee event: “The time has also come for Republicans to pass a tough new crime bill that imposes harsh penalties for dangerous repeat offenders, cracks down on rogue judges. We got rogue judges that are criminals. They are criminals, what they do to our country. The decisions that they hand down and hurt our country.”

- a. Is it a crime for a judge to rule against President Trump’s desired outcome in a particular case?

**Response:** No.

- b. Do you think that judges ruling against President Trump’s desired outcome should be “crack[ed] down on”?

**Response:** As a judicial nominee, it would be improper for me to offer an opinion on a political issue or a statement by a political figure. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canon 5.

- c. Is it possible for a judge’s decision to be correct, as a matter of fact and law, even if it differs from President Trump’s desired outcome?

**Response:** Yes.

- d. Do you agree with President Trump that we need a “tough new crime bill” that “cracks down on rogue judges”?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 12.b.

- e. Do you think that rhetoric like the example quoted above could discourage a judge from ruling against President Trump’s desired outcome?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 12.b.

- f. If you were confirmed and you ruled against President Trump’s desired outcome in a case, would you consider yourself a “rogue judge[]” and a “criminal[]”?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 12.b.

- g. Do you think statements like those made by President Trump quoted above make federal judges more or less safe?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 12.b.

- 13. Under 28 U.S.C. § 455, “[a]ny justice, judge, or magistrate judge of the United States shall disqualify [themselves] in any proceeding in which [their] impartiality might reasonably be questioned.” As a general matter, what criteria would you use when deciding whether to recuse yourself from a case?

**Response:** The recusal statute requires a federal judge to “disqualify himself in any proceedings in which his impartiality might reasonably be questioned.” 28 U.S.C. § 455(a). Subsection (b) then lists additional grounds for recusal, including a specific provision for government attorneys. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will recuse myself from all matters on which I worked on as a lawyer, and I would scrupulously apply the recusal statute, any precedents interpreting it, and any applicable canons of judicial ethics to other matters. I will consult with colleagues and judicial ethics officials as appropriate.

- 14. I have been proud to co-lead the bipartisan *Safer Supervision Act*, a bill to reform our federal supervised release system that has received substantial conservative and law enforcement support. The premise of the bill is that our federal supervision system has strayed far from how Congress designed it, as courts impose it mechanically in essentially every case, which means that probation officers do not have time to properly supervise those who most need it. The bill reinforces courts’ existing obligations under

18 U.S.C. §§ 3553 and 3583 to impose supervision as warranted by the individual facts of the case and encourages more robust use of early termination when warranted to provide positive incentives encouraging rehabilitation. At the encouragement of a bipartisan group of members of Congress, the U.S. Sentencing Commission adopted an amendment to supervision guidelines implementing certain parts of the bill; this amendment went into effect on November 1.

- a. As a sentencing judge, would you endeavor to impose supervision thoughtfully and on the basis of the individual facts of the case consistent with 18 U.S.C. § 3553 and 18 U.S.C. § 3583?

**Response:** Yes.

- b. Would you agree that the availability of early termination under 18 U.S.C. § 3583(e)(1) can provide individuals positive incentives to rehabilitate?

**Response:** Yes.

- c. Will you commit if confirmed to reviewing the *Safer Supervision Act* and the recent Sentencing Commission amendment and considering them as you develop your approach to sentencing of supervised release?

**Response:** Yes.

15. If you had to determine whether it is appropriate for the President of the United States to punish a law firm for taking on a client that the President did not like, what process would you use to perform that analysis? I assume you would faithfully follow binding precedent, but what specific precedents and/or other sources of law would you look to?

**Response:** This question calls for a response that could be seen as opining on current political disputes and ongoing litigation. As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to comment. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.

16. Do you agree that the constitutional right to travel across state lines is fundamental and well established?

**Response:** The Supreme Court has held that “freedom to travel throughout the United States . . . [is] a basic right under the Constitution.” *United States v. Guest*, 383 U.S. 745, 758 (1966).

- a. If you had to determine whether it is constitutional for a state to restrict the interstate travel of its citizens, what process would you use to perform that analysis? I assume you would faithfully follow binding precedent, but what specific precedents and/or other sources of law would you look to?

**Response:** The Supreme Court has stated that the constitutional right to travel “protects the right of a citizen of one State to enter and leave another State, the right to be treated as a welcome visitor rather than an unfriendly alien when temporarily present in the second State, and, for those travelers who elect to become permanent residents, the right to be treated like other citizens of that State.” *Saenz v. Roe*, 526 U.S. 489, 500 (1999). If confirmed, I will follow this precedent and all other binding Supreme Court and Fifth Circuit precedent.

17. Do you believe that the Constitution protects a fundamental right to privacy?

**Response:** The Supreme Court has held that there is a constitutional right to privacy in certain contexts, including a right to use contraceptives, *see Griswold v. Connecticut*, 381 U.S. 479 (1965) (marital right); *Eisenstadt v. Baird*, 405 U.S. 438 (1972) (individual right), and the right to intimate activity between same-sex partners, *see Lawrence v. Texas*, 539 U.S. 558 (2003).

- a. Do you agree that that right protects a woman’s right to use contraceptives? If you do not agree, please explain whether this right is protected or not and which constitutional rights or provisions encompass it.

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 17.

18. Does the public’s original understanding of the meaning of a constitutional provision constrain its application decades or centuries later?

**Response:** The Supreme Court has interpreted constitutional provisions with reference to their original public meanings. *See, e.g., United States v. Rahimi*, 602 U.S. 680 (2024); *N.Y. State Rifle & Pistol Ass’n v. Bruen*, 597 U.S. 1 (2022); *District of Columbia v. Heller*, 554 U.S. 570 (2008).

- a. What specific sources would you employ to discern the public’s original understanding of the meaning of a constitutional provision? Please provide three examples of sources you consider reliable in this regard.

**Response:** I would first consult the words of the Constitution. I would also consult Supreme Court and Fifth Circuit authority on the issue to determine if binding precedent exists. Additionally, I would consult historical sources to understand the meaning of the word or phrase at the time of enactment or ratification.

19. Do you believe that immigrants, regardless of legal status, are entitled to due process and fair adjudication of their claims?

**Response:** The Supreme Court has held that “all ‘persons’ within the United States, including aliens, whether their presence here is lawful, unlawful, temporary, or

permanent” are entitled to certain levels of due process. *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 693 (2001).

20. Should you be confirmed, what would you do if a party refuses to comply with one of your orders?

**Response:** If a party fails to comply with a court order, I will consider issuing a show cause order, provide the parties with notice and an opportunity to be heard, and assess whether contempt is appropriate, following all applicable law and precedent.

21. What criteria would you use to determine whether a party was engaging in abusive litigation tactics, such as excessive discovery requests, repeatedly or frivolously filing motions, or other procedural delays?

**Response:** If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I would look to Federal Rules of Civil Procedure 11, 26, 27, and 37, as well as all applicable precedent. Whether a party has engaged in abusive litigation tactics is a fact-specific inquiry. In evaluating any such claim, I would ensure that all parties receive proper notice and an opportunity to be heard.

- a. If you determined that a party was engaging in such tactics, how would you address it?

**Response:** If a district court determines that a party has engaged in such practices, the court has broad authority to impose sanctions and other remedies—all designed to punish the misconduct, deter future violations, and compensate the opposing party for expenses incurred.

22. What role, if any, should the practical consequences of a particular ruling play in a judge’s rendering of a decision?

**Response:** The extent to which a district court judge should consider the practical consequences of a ruling depends on the circumstances. For example, whether to grant a stay or a preliminary injunction requires a court to consider the practical consequences when examining both the “public interest” and the extent to which the moving party “is likely to suffer irreparable harm in the absence of preliminary relief.” *Winter v. Nat. Res. Def. Council, Inc.*, 555 U.S. 7, 20 (2008). In most circumstances, however, a court should rule according to the law without regard to the consequences.

23. What role, if any, should a judge’s personal life experience play in his or her decision-making process?

**Response:** A judge’s personal life experience should prepare him or her to decide cases fairly and to treat all litigants and attorneys with respect.

24. What role, if any, should empathy play in a judge’s decision-making process?

**Response:** A judge should be mindful that the decisions he or she makes will have an impact on the lives of real people. That said, a judge should rule according to the law, regardless of whether he or she empathizes with a litigant.

25. What case or legal matter are you most proud of having worked on during your career?

**Response:** I am proud to have represented the State of Texas in the successful defense of how Texas finances its public education system. This case established important precedent in the separation-of-powers context by recognizing that, although the State's funding system was imperfect, education policy decisions are the responsibility of the legislative branch, not the judiciary.

26. Some district court judges have issued standing orders indicating that the court will favor holding an oral argument when there is a representation that the argument would be handled by a junior lawyer. Such efforts are intended to provide more speaking opportunities in court for junior lawyers. Would you consider issuing a standing order that would encourage more junior lawyers to handle oral arguments? Why or why not?

**Response:** I believe that meaningful courtroom experience for junior attorneys is important to the sustainability of the legal profession and should be encouraged where appropriate.

a. How else would you support the skills development of junior lawyers appearing before you?

**Response:** If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I would encourage parties who appear before me to seek opportunities for junior attorneys to gain experience in the courtroom. I would also utilize the resources of a local Inn of Court to promote the importance of mentoring junior attorneys.

27. Discuss your proposed hiring process for law clerks.

**Response:** If confirmed, I would seek the advice of my colleagues in the Southern District of Texas as to the best procedures and timelines for law clerk hiring.

a. Do you think law clerks should be protected by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act?

**Response:** Every individual should enjoy a workplace free of discrimination, harassment, or other misconduct, and everyone should be treated with respect. To the extent this question calls for a response that could be seen as opining on political matters or potential future cases, it would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to respond. *See* Code of Conduct for U.S. Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.

28. Recently, multiple studies have revealed ongoing problems with workplace conduct policies and outcomes in the federal judiciary. In a national climate survey, hundreds of judiciary employees reported that they experienced sexual harassment, discrimination, or other forms of misconduct on the job. A study by the Federal Judicial Center and the National Academy of Public Administration found the branch has failed to set up trusted reporting systems for employees who experience misconduct or ensure those handling complaints are adequately trained.

- a. If confirmed, what proactive steps would you take to ensure that the clerks and judicial assistants who work in your chambers are treated with respect and are not subject to misconduct?

**Response:** Every individual should enjoy a workplace free of discrimination, harassment, or other misconduct, and everyone should be treated with respect. If confirmed, I would consult with colleagues in the Southern District of Texas for advice on preferred policies and available programs and trainings.

- b. What proactive steps would you take to ensure that any workplace-related concerns that your clerks and judicial assistants may have are fully addressed?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 28.a.

- c. If you are confirmed and you later hear from a colleague or your chambers staff that another judge is acting inappropriately, what steps would you take to help ensure the problem is addressed?

**Response:** I would consider all options under the circumstances, including reporting the allegations to the appropriate authorities.

29. Do you agree with me that the attack at the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, was an insurrection? Why or why not?

**Response:** The characterization of the events on January 6, 2021, is a subject of political debate, is involved in pending litigation, and could come before me if I am confirmed. It is therefore inappropriate for me to characterize those events. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.

- a. If you think this question would require you to express an opinion on “political” matters, as some judicial nominees have responded when asked this question, please explain why labeling the events of January 6, 2021, as either “an insurrection” or “not an insurrection” requires you to opine on a “political” matter.

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 29.

30. As you know, the President has the power under the Constitution to grant executive clemency relief. Even so, in your opinion, do you think the individuals convicted of assaulting law enforcement officers at the Capitol on January 6, 2021, deserved to be pardoned? I am asking for your opinion about whether the pardons were prudent, not whether the President has the authority to issue them.

**Response:** The question of whether a pardon is prudent is a matter of political controversy. As a result, it would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to weigh in on this issue. *See Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canon 5.*

31. If you were the President on January 20, 2025, would you have pardoned the individuals convicted of assaulting law enforcement officers at the Capitol on January 6, 2021? Again, I know that the President has the power under the Constitution to grant executive clemency relief. I want to know whether you—if serving as President on January 20, 2025—would have chosen to issue pardons to those convicted of assaulting law enforcement officers at the Capitol on January 6, 2021.

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 30.

32. You have served in Texas Governor Greg Abbott’s office since 2018. Please describe your involvement, if any, in advising, facilitating, defending, or otherwise working on policies (a), (b), and (c) below undertaken by Governor Abbott during that timeframe:

- a. Executive Order No. GA-36 relating to the prohibition of governmental entities and officials from mandating face coverings or restricting activities in response to the COVID-19 disaster.

**Response:** I consulted with staff in the Office of the Governor and the Governor regarding this issue. To the extent this question calls for specific information about my legal work for a client, I cannot divulge those details because they are protected by several privileges, including the attorney-client privilege.

- b. Operation Lone Star, under which, “[t]o support [President Trump’s] mission to secure the border, Governor Greg Abbott deputized the Texas National Guard to make immigration arrests, deployed the Texas Tactical Border Force to work side-by-side with U.S. Border Patrol agents, directed the Texas Department of Public Safety to deploy tactical strike teams to help locate and arrest criminal illegal immigrants,” and bused over 100,000 migrants to cities across the country.

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 32.a.

- c. Directing the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services to “[i]nvestigate [g]ender-[t]ransitioning [p]rocedures [a]s [c]hild [a]buse.”

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 32.a.

33. If confirmed, will you recuse yourself from litigation involving challenges to policies instituted by Governor Abbott?

**Response:** The recusal statute requires a federal judge to “disqualify himself in any proceedings in which his impartiality might reasonably be questioned.” 28 U.S.C. § 455(a). Subsection (b) then lists additional grounds for recusal, including a specific provision for government attorneys. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will recuse myself from all matters on which I worked on as a lawyer, and I would scrupulously apply the recusal statute, any precedents interpreting it, and any applicable canons of judicial ethics to other matters. I will consult with colleagues and judicial ethics officials as appropriate.

34. In 2003, you joined the “Brief of 13,922 Current Law Students at Accredited American Law Schools as *Amici Curiae* in Support of Respondents” in the U.S. Supreme Court case *Grutter v. Bollinger*. The brief states that the students “urg[e] the Court to affirm the Sixth Circuit’s judgment that the promotion of diversity in higher education is a compelling governmental interest and that the consideration of race as one factor among many in admissions determinations is a permissible means of furthering diversity. As current law students at accredited law schools across the country, *amici* are uniquely positioned to comment on the benefits accrued from diversity in legal education and will be uniquely affected by this decision of the Court. *Amici* believe that a racially diverse student body provides invaluable educational benefits.”

- a. Do you stand by your decision to join this brief?

**Response:** I do not recall the circumstances of how my name became associated with this brief that was filed over 20 years ago while I was a student in law school. I did not author the statements that are included in this brief. My ethical obligations as a judicial nominee prohibit me from discussing my policy or political views. Every day, I set aside my own views and advocate the interests of my clients. If I am to be confirmed as a judge, I would likewise set aside any views that I have now or may develop. Additionally, I would faithfully apply binding Supreme Court and Fifth Circuit precedent in all cases that came before me, including precedent concerning the prohibition on race-conscious admissions programs, such as *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*, 600 U.S. 181 (2023).

- b. Do you still believe that “the promotion of diversity in higher education is a compelling governmental interest and that the consideration of race as one factor among many in admissions determinations is a permissible means of furthering diversity”?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 34.a.

- c. Do you still believe that “a racially diverse student body provides invaluable educational benefits”?

**Response:** In *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*, 600 U.S. 181 (2023), the Supreme Court held that the race-conscious admissions programs used by universities violate the Equal Protection Clause. If confirmed, I would fairly and faithfully apply this precedent and any other applicable precedent.

35. You note in your Senate Judiciary Questionnaire that in 2001, a resolution was passed “by the Texas House of Representatives . . . in recognition of [your] graduation from The University of Texas at Austin.” How did you come to receive this recognition?

**Response:** I do not recall the exact circumstances that led to this resolution, but it was an honor to receive the recognition.

36. In your Questionnaire, you note that just 5% of your practice has involved criminal proceedings.

- a. Why do you think you are qualified to serve as a federal judge overseeing a substantial criminal docket if you have so little experience with criminal cases?

**Response:** Throughout my career as a litigator, I have been a generalist, handling a wide range of complex legal matters across many different areas of the law. In my professional roles, I have had to learn new areas of the law quickly to provide the best legal representation to my clients. I am confident that my commitment to thorough preparation would serve me well on the federal bench if I am confirmed. I believe that the skills one acquires by practicing civil litigation, such as analyzing complex legal questions, evaluating evidence, and managing a docket, translate directly to the skillset that is necessary to be successful in the criminal context. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will commit myself to mastering criminal procedure and all other aspects of the criminal docket.

- b. If you are confirmed, what resources will you use to get up to speed on criminal proceedings?

**Response:** I have already started reviewing the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, applicable Fifth Circuit precedent on criminal law, and the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure and Federal Rules of Evidence. I am committed to being fully prepared to handle criminal matters competently and fairly from the outset.

**Questions for the Record for Angela Colmenero**  
**Submitted by Senator Richard Blumenthal**  
**June 17, 2026**

1. If confirmed, will you recuse yourself from any case where a reasonable person, knowing all the relevant facts, might question your impartiality, even if you personally believe you can be fair?

**Response:** Yes. If confirmed, I will follow 28 U.S.C. § 455 and all applicable Supreme Court and circuit precedent governing recusal. A judge must disqualify herself in any proceeding in which her impartiality might reasonably be questioned.

- a. If confirmed, will you recuse yourself from cases involving individuals, organizations, or entities to which you or your family members have made political contributions or provided political support?

**Response:** If confirmed, I will evaluate recusal in accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 455 and all applicable precedent, including any circumstances in which my impartiality might reasonably be questioned.

- b. If confirmed, will you recuse yourself from cases involving former clients, former law firms, or organizations with which you have had significant professional relationships?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 1.a.

- c. If confirmed, will you recuse yourself from cases involving personal friends, social acquaintances, or individuals with whom you have ongoing personal relationships?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 1.a.

2. If confirmed, will you commit to avoiding all *ex parte* communications about pending cases, including informal discussions at social events or professional gatherings?

**Response:** If confirmed, I will adhere strictly to the Code of Conduct for United States Judges and all applicable rules prohibiting improper *ex parte* communications.

- d. If confirmed, will you avoid discussing pending cases or judicial business with elected officials, political appointees, or political operatives?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 2.

- e. If confirmed, will you commit to declining meetings or communications with lobbyists, advocacy groups, or special interests seeking to influence your judicial decisions?

**Response:** If confirmed, I will comply with the Code of Conduct for United States Judges, including Canon 2 instructing judges to avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety in all activities, and will not participate in meetings or communicate with lobbyists, advocacy groups, or special interests that seek to influence my judicial decisions.

- f. If confirmed, will you refrain from making public statements about legal or political issues that could reasonably be expected to come before your court?

**Response:** The Code of Conduct for United States Judges, including Canon 3(A)(6) and Canon 5, governs such matters. If confirmed, I will faithfully follow the Code and will refrain from making public statements that could reasonably be expected to affect the outcome or impair the fairness of pending or impending matters.

- 3. If confirmed, will you commit to filing complete and accurate financial disclosure reports that include all required information about your financial interests and activities?

**Response:** Yes.

- g. If confirmed, will you decline all gifts from parties who might appear before your court or who have interests that could be affected by your judicial decisions?

**Response:** If confirmed, I will comply with the Code of Conduct for United States Judges and all applicable statutes and regulations governing gifts.

- h. If confirmed, will you decline privately funded travel, hospitality, or entertainment that could create an appearance of impropriety or special access?

**Response:** If confirmed, I will comply with the Code of Conduct for United States Judges and all other ethical rules and responsibilities regarding the acceptance of travel, hospitality, or entertainment.

- i. If confirmed, will you ensure that any teaching, speaking, or writing activities comply with judicial ethics requirements and do not create conflicts with your judicial duties?

**Response:** If confirmed, I will comply with the Code of Conduct for United States Judges, including all rules governing teaching, speaking, or writing activities.

- 4. The House Republican-authored budget reconciliation bill for Fiscal Year 2026 had included a provision that would have limited federal judges' ability to hold government officials in contempt. While the Senate Parliamentarian ruled that the provision violated the Byrd Rule, and it was, therefore, removed, it would have prohibited federal courts from issuing contempt penalties against officials who disobey preliminary injunctions or

Temporary Restraining Orders if the party seeking the order did not provide financial security to cover potential future damages for wrongful enjoining.

The contempt power was first codified in law in the Judiciary Act of 1789. In 1873, the Supreme Court described it as “inherent in all courts” and “essential to the preservation of order in judicial proceedings and to the enforcement of the judgements, orders, and writs of the courts, and consequently to the due administration of justice.” Yet House Republicans are seeking to exempt government officials from this key tool for judicial enforcement.

- a. Do you believe the contempt power is “essential . . . to the due administration of justice[?]”

**Response:** The Supreme Court has stated that “the power to punish for contempts is inherent in all courts, has been many times decided and may be regarded as settled law. It is essential to the administration of justice.” *Michelson v. United States ex rel. Chicago, St. P., M. & O. Ry. Co.*, 266 U.S. 42, 65 (1924). If confirmed, I will faithfully apply all binding precedent concerning the scope and use of the contempt power.

- b. Do you believe that federal judges should be limited in their ability to hold government officials who defy court orders in contempt?

**Response:** This question calls for me to comment on a matter of significant public and political debate. As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to express views on public controversies, political issues, or matters that could come before the courts. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.

5. If confirmed, you, like all other members of the federal bench, would have the ability to issue orders. On February 9, 2025, Vice President Vance posted on X that “[j]udges aren’t allowed to control the executive’s legitimate power.” This raises an extremely concerning specter of Executive Branch defiance of court orders.

- a. If confirmed, would you have the ability to issue orders?

**Response:** Yes.

- i. Would you have the ability to enforce those orders?

**Response:** Yes.

- ii. What powers would you have to enforce those orders?

**Response:** A federal district court judge has both civil and criminal contempt powers to enforce an order.

- b. Does there exist a legal basis for federal Executive Branch officials to defy federal court orders? If so, what basis and in which circumstances?

**Response:** Litigants, including executive branch officials, are expected to follow court orders issued in a proceeding to which the litigant is a party. If a litigant disagrees with a judicial order, the normal recourse is to seek reconsideration, to appeal, to seek a stay, or to pursue some combination of those options. Courts have recognized exceptions to the general rule in very narrow circumstances, including for lack of jurisdiction or impossibility. *See, e.g., In re Sawyer*, 124 U.S. 200, 220 (1888) (“Where a court has jurisdiction, it has a right to decide every question which occurs in the cause; and, whether its decision be correct or otherwise, its judgment, until reversed, is regarded as binding in every other court: but, if it act without authority, its judgments and orders are regarded as nullities. They are not voidable, but simply void.”); *United States v. Rylander*, 460 U.S. 752, 757 (1983) (recognizing that parties may not be bound to comply with an order where it is “factually impossible” to do so). The Supreme Court has also recognized that, in some circumstances, it may be necessary for a party to defy a court order to appeal it. *See Mohawk Indus., Inc. v. Carpenter*, 558 U.S. 100, 111 (2009) (“Another long-recognized option is for a party to defy a disclosure order and incur court-imposed sanctions.”).

- c. Does there exist a legal basis for state officials to defy federal court orders? If so, what basis and in which circumstances?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 5.b.

- d. What would make a court order unlawful?

**Response:** Court orders are binding and must be followed unless and until the court, or a reviewing court, stays, vacates, or reverses the order. An order that is alleged by a litigant to be erroneous is still binding. A court order could be considered unlawful, for example, if the court lacked jurisdiction or committed error when interpreting the law or adjudicating issues of fact.

- i. What is the process a party should follow if it believes a court order to be unlawful?

**Response:** If a litigant disagrees with a court order, the normal recourse is to seek reconsideration, to appeal, to seek a stay, or to pursue some combination of those options.

- ii. Is it ever acceptable to not follow this process? When and why?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Questions 5.b.

6. Were you in Washington, D.C. on January 6, 2021?

**Response:** No.

- a. Were you inside the U.S. Capitol or on the U.S. Capitol grounds on January 6, 2021?

**Response:** No.

7. During your time at the Office of the Governor of Texas, you worked to defeat a lawsuit seeking to ensure that Texas's near-total abortion ban would not block pregnant patients from receiving abortion care when necessitated by an emergency medical condition. If confirmed, how can litigants expect you to be unbiased in reproductive rights cases?

**Response:** As an attorney at the Texas Attorney General's Office, I had a duty to defend the laws enacted by the state legislature and to zealously represent the interests of my clients. I carried out those duties to best of my ability. I recognize that there is a difference between the role of an advocate and the role of a judge. All judges who previously litigated cases have taken positions on behalf of clients. It is nonetheless incumbent on every judge to put aside his or her personal beliefs and previous clients, and instead to apply the law fairly and faithfully, without regard to any positions he or she might have advanced as advocates. If confirmed, I will handle every case that comes before me in a fair and impartial manner.

8. You served as lead counsel for Texas in defending SB14, Texas's voter ID law, from challenges asserting that the law was racially discriminatory and substantially burdened the fundamental right to vote. Hundreds of thousands of eligible voters in Texas could not meet the statute's onerous requirements. If confirmed, how can future litigants trust that you will remain unbiased on voting rights issues?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 7.

**Senator Mazie K. Hirono**  
**Senate Judiciary Committee**

**Nomination Hearing**  
**Questions for the Record for Angela Colmenero**

1. As part of my responsibility as a member of this committee to ensure the fitness of nominees, I ask each nominee to answer two initial questions:
  - a. **Since you became a legal adult, have you ever made unwanted requests for sexual favors, or committed any verbal or physical harassment or assault of a sexual nature?**

**Response:** No.

- b. **Have you ever faced discipline or entered into a settlement related to this kind of conduct?**

**Response:** No.

2. You served as interim Attorney General of Texas while articles of impeachment against Ken Paxton were considered by the Texas Senate in 2023. **Is that correct?**

**Response:** I served as the Provisional Attorney General of Texas from July 2023 to September 2023. During my tenure, the Texas Senate resolved itself into a court of impeachment.

3. The Republican-majority Texas House of Representatives impeached Ken Paxton by a vote of 121 to 23. **Is that correct?**

**Response:** Based on public reporting, I understand that vote count to be correct.

4. You are a senior legal advisor for Governor Abbott's administration. In 2021, you served as Deputy General Counsel and Principal Deputy General Counsel.
  - a. **Is that recitation of your work history correct?**

**Response:** Yes.

- b. **Did you advise on the legality of bussing migrants as part of Operation Lone Star?**

**Response:** I consulted with staff in the Office of the Governor and the Governor regarding this issue. To the extent this question calls for specific information about my legal work for a client, I cannot divulge those details because they are protected by several privileges, including the attorney-client privilege.

- c. **If yes, on what basis did you determine the legality of this operation?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 4.b.

- d. **At the time when you advised on this matter, were you aware of the inhumane nature of this operation?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 4.b.

- e. **Did you consider either public opinion or politics in preparing your advice on this proposal?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 4.b.

5. While serving as Interim Attorney General, you recused yourself from issuing a legal opinion on an issue due to a perceived conflict of interest. **Is that correct?**

**Response:** Yes.

6. During your time working for Governor Abbott, you have covered a variety of issues from immigration to reproductive healthcare to issues affecting transgender individuals accessing public services.

- a. **Is that correct?**

**Response:** Yes.

- b. **Since your impartiality could reasonably be questioned, will you recuse yourself from any case involving the Governor's office?**

**Response:** All judges have personal beliefs, and all former litigators have a record of previous advocacy positions. It is nonetheless incumbent on every judge to put aside his or her personal beliefs and previous clients, and instead to apply the law fairly and faithfully, without regard to persons, prejudice, or politics. If confirmed, I would do so in every case. Moreover, with respect to previous advocacy positions I have taken on behalf of my clients and other work I have done on behalf of my clients, I would scrupulously apply the recusal standards set forth in 28 U.S.C. § 455, any precedents interpreting it, any applicable canons of judicial ethics, and all pertinent advisory opinions.

- c. **Since your impartiality could reasonably be questioned, will you recuse yourself from any case involving immigration?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 6.b.

- d. **Since your impartiality could reasonably be questioned, will you recuse yourself from any case involving reproductive healthcare?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 6.b.

- e. **Since your impartiality could reasonably be questioned, will you recuse yourself from any case involving LGBTQ civil rights?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 6.b.

7. You have advised Governor Abbott's re-election campaign and received several thousand dollars in compensation for this role. **If a case comes before you in which Governor Abbott's personal or electoral interests are implicated, will you recuse?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 6.b.

8. While in law school, you signed onto an amicus brief expressing your support for the value of diversity in classrooms and the principles of affirmative action to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion. Currently, these values are under assault by this administration.

- a. **Did you sign that amicus brief?**

**Response:** Yes. I do not recall the circumstances of how my name became associated with this brief that was filed over 20 years ago while I was a student in law school. I did not author the statements that are included in this brief.

- b. **Do you still support the value of diversity in the classroom?** If your position has changed, explain.

**Response:** My ethical obligations as a judicial nominee prohibit me from discussing my current policy or political views. Every day, I set aside my own views and advocate the interests of my clients. If I were to be confirmed as a judge, I would likewise set aside any views that I have now or may develop. Additionally, I would faithfully apply binding Supreme Court and Fifth Circuit precedent in all cases that came before me, including precedent concerning the prohibition on race-conscious admissions programs, such as *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*, 600 U.S. 181 (2023).

9. Looking back at the conclusion of the 2020 presidential election:

- a. **Did Joe Biden receive the most votes in the 2020 Presidential Election?**

**Response:** Pursuant to the legal framework set out in the Constitution, Joe Biden was certified as the winner of the 2020 election and served as the 46th President of the United States. To the extent you are asking about disputes or political statements regarding the 2020 presidential election, it would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to provide such an answer. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.

- b. **Did Joe Biden receive more votes than Donald Trump in the 2020 Presidential Election?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 9.a.

- c. **Does the candidate who receives more votes in a presidential election win the popular vote?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 9.a.

- d. **Did Joe Biden win the popular vote in the 2020 presidential election?**

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 9.a.

- e. **To your knowledge, was the 2020 election “stolen,” were votes manipulated to influence the outcome of the election, or did any other form of tampering occur in the 2020 election?**

**Response:** To the extent you are asking about disputes or political statements regarding the 2020 presidential election, it would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to provide such an answer. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.

**Nomination of Angela Colmenero**  
**United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas**  
**Questions for the Record**  
**Submitted June 17, 2026**

**QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR BOOKER**

1. Explain the factors you would consider, if you are confirmed, to determine whether to recuse yourself in matters involving former clients, recent legal work and advocacy, and parties with whom you have had substantial financial relationships.

**Response:** The recusal statute requires a federal judge to “disqualify himself in any proceedings in which his impartiality might reasonably be questioned.” 28 U.S.C. § 455(a). Subsection (b) then lists additional grounds for recusal, including a specific provision for government attorneys. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will recuse myself from all matters on which I worked on as a lawyer, and I would scrupulously apply the recusal statute, any precedents interpreting it, and any applicable canons of judicial ethics to other matters. I will consult with colleagues and judicial ethics officials as appropriate.

2. If you are confirmed, how would you handle a request from President Trump, or anyone affiliated with him acting on his behalf, to decide a matter in a way that would benefit the President personally, financially, or politically?

**Response:** If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will reject any request by anyone outside of the normal legal process to rule in a way that would benefit an individual personally, financially, or politically.

- a. What ethical obligations govern your response to such a request?

**Response:** The relevant ethical obligations governing any response would depend on the specific facts and circumstances of the request. In considering any ethical obligations in such a scenario, I would look to the relevant laws, codes of conduct, rules, regulations, and practices, including 28 U.S.C. § 455 and the Code of Conduct for United States Judges. I would also consult with colleagues and judicial ethics officials as appropriate.

- b. Do you believe existing recusal and conduct rules are sufficient to address this scenario?

**Response:** I believe that both the appearance of impartiality and actual impartiality are important in maintaining public confidence in our judicial system. As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to opine on the sufficiency of the existing recusal and conduct rules, as such rules may be matters of political controversy, may be subject to pending litigation, and could come before me if I am fortunate enough to be confirmed. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.

3. President Trump has repeatedly responded to adverse judicial rulings by threatening sitting judges, including calling for their impeachment and publicly disparaging them by name.

- a. Do you believe those statements are consistent with the rule of law?

**Response:** As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to opine on a political issue or a statement by any political figure. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canon 5.

- b. If you were to rule against the Administration and face similar attacks, would you take any action in response?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 3.a.

- c. Do you believe a President's public attacks on the judiciary constitute an attempt to interfere with the independence of the federal courts?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 3.a.

- d. Are you aware of any ethical obligation on the part of judges to speak out when the independence of the judiciary is threatened by the political branches?

**Response:** I am unaware of any such ethical obligations.

4. If this Committee were to establish that a sitting federal judge knowingly provided false testimony to this Committee, what do you believe the appropriate process and consequences should be?

**Response:** I presume procedures are in place to address that situation if it arose, and I would defer to this Committee to follow those procedures. But as a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to opine on this hypothetical political and legal dispute. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canons 3, 5.

5. If this Committee were to establish that a political appointee knowingly provided false testimony to this Committee, what do you believe the appropriate process and consequences should be?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 4.

6. How would you characterize your judicial philosophy?

**Response:** If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, my judicial philosophy would be to faithfully and fully carry out the Article III duties of a judge on an "inferior court" to the "one [S]upreme Court." *See* U.S. Const. art. III. As a district court judge, I would fairly and faithfully apply all binding precedent from the Supreme Court and the Fifth Circuit. To the

extent there is no binding precedent, I would endeavor to use the modes of judicial reasoning set forth by the Supreme Court, particularly textualism and originalism.

7. What do you understand originalism to mean?

**Response:** Originalism means interpreting provisions of the U.S. Constitution by looking to the original public meaning of the text at the time the provisions were ratified.

8. Do you consider yourself an originalist?

**Response:** Yes.

9. What do you understand textualism to mean?

**Response:** Textualism means interpreting the text of a statute as it was written in accordance with the meaning it had at the time of its enactment.

10. Do you consider yourself a textualist?

**Response:** Yes.

11. Legislative history refers to the record Congress produces during the process of passing a bill into law, such as detailed reports by congressional committees about a pending bill or statements by key congressional leaders while a law was being drafted. Some federal judges consider legislative history when analyzing the meaning of a statute.

a. If you are confirmed to serve on the federal bench, would you consult and cite legislative history to analyze or interpret a federal statute?

**Response:** Reliance on legislative history is unnecessary when a statute's language is unambiguous. Legislative history remains subordinate to the actual text of the statute. If confirmed, I would faithfully apply all binding precedent of the Supreme Court and the Fifth Circuit concerning the use of legislative history.

b. Do you believe that congressional intent matters when interpreting a statute? Why or why not.

**Response:** The Supreme Court has stated that "[t]he starting point in discerning congressional intent is the existing statutory text." *Lamie v. U.S. Trustee*, 540 U.S. 526, 534 (2004). "It is well established that when the statute's language is plain, the sole function of the courts—at least where the disposition required by the text is not absurd—is to enforce it according to its terms." *Id.* (internal quotation marks omitted). Where the text is not plain, however, the Supreme Court has held that extrinsic materials are relevant "to the extent they shed a reliable light on the enacting Legislature's understanding of otherwise ambiguous terms." *Exxon Mobil Corp. v. Allapattah Servs., Inc.*, 545 U.S. 546, 568 (2005).

12. According to an academic study, Black men were 65 percent more likely than similarly-situated white men to be charged with federal offenses that carry harsh mandatory minimum sentences.<sup>1</sup>

a. What do you attribute this to?

**Response:** As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to discuss matters of public policy and political controversy. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canon 5. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will treat every person who comes before me equally and with respect, regardless of race.

13. A recent report by the United States Sentencing Commission observed demographic differences in sentences imposed during the five-year period studied, with Black men receiving federal prison sentences that were 13.4 percent longer than white men.<sup>2</sup>

a. What do you attribute this to?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 12.a.

14. What role do you think federal judges, who review difficult, complex criminal cases, can play in ensuring that a person's race did not factor into a prosecutor's decision or other instances where officials exercise discretion in our criminal justice system?

**Response:** It is the obligation of all participants in the criminal justice system, especially those who serve as judges, to treat all individuals equally and with respect, regardless of race. If a party argues that a government actor impermissibly considered race in making a discretionary decision, the court must fairly adjudicate that case according to the facts and the law.

15. Do you believe it is an important goal for there to be demographic diversity in the judicial branch? Why or why not.

**Response:** It is never appropriate for someone to be denied an opportunity to serve as a judge based on race, ethnicity, sex, religion, or any other protected characteristic. It is valuable for the federal bench to benefit from a wide variety of professional experiences.

16. Indicate whether you have ever published written material or made any public statements relating to the following topics. If so, provide a description of the written or public statement, the date and place/publication where the statement was made or published, and a summary of its subject matter. Mere reference to the list of publications and statements provided in your Senate Judiciary Questionnaire is insufficient; provide specific responses.

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<sup>1</sup> Sonja B. Starr & M. Marit Rehani, *Racial Disparity in Federal Criminal Sentences*, 122 J. POL. ECON. 1320, 1323 (2014).

<sup>2</sup> U.S. SENTENCING COMM'N, DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES IN SENTENCING 2 (Nov. 2023), [https://www.ussc.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/research-and-publications/research-publications/2023/20231114\\_Demographic-Differences.pdf](https://www.ussc.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/research-and-publications/research-publications/2023/20231114_Demographic-Differences.pdf).

If you have not disclosed a copy of the publication or a transcript of the statement to the Judiciary Committee, attach a copy or link to the materials and explain why you have not previously disclosed them.

- a. Abortion
- b. Affirmative action
- c. Contraceptives or birth control
- d. Gender-affirming care
- e. Firearms
- f. Immigration
- g. Same-sex marriage
- h. Miscegenation
- i. Participation of transgender people in sports
- j. Service of transgender people in the U.S. military
- k. Racial discrimination
- l. Sex discrimination
- m. Religious discrimination
- n. Disability discrimination
- o. Climate change or environmental disasters
- p. “DEI” or Diversity Equity and Inclusion

**Response:** To the best of my knowledge, my Senate Judiciary Questionnaire, along with the supplements and materials I submitted to the Committee, contains the most exhaustive and current collection of my written work, speeches, and presentations that may have addressed the topics listed above.

17. Under what circumstances would it be acceptable for an executive branch official to ignore or defy a federal court order?

**Response:** Litigants, including executive branch officials, are expected to follow court orders issued in a proceeding to which the litigant is a party. If a litigant disagrees with a judicial order, the normal recourse is to seek reconsideration, to appeal, to seek a stay, or to pursue some combination of those options. Courts have recognized exceptions to the general rule in very narrow circumstances, including for lack of jurisdiction or impossibility. *See, e.g., In re Sawyer*, 124 U.S. 200, 220 (1888) (“Where a court has jurisdiction, it has a right to decide every question which occurs in the cause; and, whether its decision be correct or otherwise, its judgment, until reversed, is regarded as binding in every other court: but, if it act without authority, its judgments and orders are regarded as nullities. They are not voidable, but simply void.”); *United States v. Rylander*, 460 U.S. 752, 757 (1983) (recognizing that parties may not be bound to comply with an order where it is “factually impossible” to do so). The Supreme Court has also recognized that, in some circumstances, it may be necessary for a party to defy a court order to appeal it. *See Mohawk Indus., Inc. v. Carpenter*, 558 U.S. 100, 111 (2009) (“Another long-recognized option is for a party to defy a disclosure order and incur court-imposed sanctions.”).

- a. If an executive branch official ignores or defies a federal court order, what legal analysis would you employ to determine whether that official should be held in contempt?

**Response:** It would depend on the facts and circumstances. If I am confirmed and a party before me fails to comply with a court order, I would issue a show cause order, provide the parties with notice and an opportunity to be heard, and assess whether contempt is appropriate, following all applicable law and precedent.

- b. Is there any legal basis that would allow an executive branch official to ignore or defy temporary restraining orders and preliminary injunctions issued by federal district court judges? Provide each one and the justification.

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 17.

18. Does the president have the power to ignore or nullify laws passed by Congress?

**Response:** The Constitution gives the President the authority to veto legislation passed by Congress. U.S. Const. art. I, § 7, cl. 2. Additionally, the Constitution vests legislative power in Congress and requires the President to “take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed.” U.S. Const. art. II, § 3, cl. 5. The President is also authorized to “decide ‘how to prioritize and how aggressively to pursue legal actions against defendants who violate the law.’” *United States v. Texas*, 599 U.S. 670, 678 (2023) (quoting *TransUnion LLC v. Ramirez*, 594 U.S. 413, 429 (2021)). How these constitutional powers and authorities apply to presidential action is a matter of ongoing dispute and implicates issues that could come before me as a judge. As a result, as a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to comment further. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canon 3(A)(6).

19. Does the president have the power to withhold funds appropriated by Congress?

**Response:** As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to opine on matters that are the subject of pending or impending litigation and that are matters of public policy and political controversy. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.

20. Does the president have the power to discriminate by withholding funds against state or local jurisdictions based on the political party of a jurisdiction’s elected officials?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 19.

21. Does the Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution establish that federal laws supersede conflicting state laws?

**Response:** Yes.

22. Does the U.S. Constitution apply to non-citizens present in the United States?

**Response:** The Supreme Court has held that “all ‘persons’ within the United States, including aliens, whether their presence here is lawful, unlawful, temporary, or permanent” are entitled to certain levels of due process. *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 693 (2001).

23. Is it constitutional for Congress to delegate to federal agencies the power to implement statutes through rulemaking?

**Response:** The Supreme Court has recognized Congress’s authority to delegate regulatory authority to federal agencies within constitutional limits. *See Federal Communications Commission v. Consumers’ Research*, 606 U.S. 656, 673 (2025). If confirmed, I will faithfully apply binding precedent regarding the authority of Congress to delegate regulatory authority to federal agencies.

24. Was *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954), correctly decided?

**Response:** Yes. Although it is generally inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to comment on the merits of the Supreme Court’s binding precedents, prior nominees have made an exception to this practice for *Brown v. Board of Education*, and I will join them.

25. Is *Griswold v. Connecticut*, 381 U.S. 479 (1965), binding precedent? Describe the facts and holding of this case.

**Response:** *Griswold* held that the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment protects the right to use contraceptives. *Griswold* is binding precedent. If confirmed, I would faithfully apply it.

26. Is *Lawrence v. Texas*, 539 U.S. 558 (2003), binding precedent? Describe the facts and holding of this case.

**Response:** *Lawrence* held that laws making it a crime for two persons of the same sex to engage in certain intimate sexual conduct violated the Fourteenth Amendment. *Lawrence* is binding precedent. If confirmed, I would faithfully apply it.

27. Is *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 576 U.S. 644 (2015), binding precedent? Describe the facts and holding of this case.

**Response:** *Obergefell* involved state laws that defined marriage as a union between one man and one woman. The Supreme Court held that those laws were unconstitutional because the Due Process Clause and Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment protect a same-sex couple’s right to marry in all states. *Obergefell* is binding precedent. If confirmed, I would faithfully apply it.

28. Do you believe that President Biden won the 2020 election? Note that this question is not asking who was certified as president in the 2020 election. A response that references only certification will be treated as a refusal to answer.

**Response:** As a matter of law, Joe Biden was the winner of the 2020 election. He was certified as the winner of the 2020 election and served as the 46th President of the United States. To the extent you are asking about disputes or political statements regarding the 2020 presidential election, it would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to provide such an answer consistent with my ethical obligations as a judicial nominee. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.

- a. Did Biden win a majority of the electoral vote in the 2020 election?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 28.

- b. Do you believe that the results of the 2020 election, meaning the vote count, were accurate? If not, explain why not and examples.

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 28.

29. The 22nd Amendment says that “no person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice.”<sup>3</sup>

- a. Do you acknowledge that this is the law of the land?

**Response:** Yes. *See* U.S. Const. art. VI, cl. 2.

- b. Do you agree that President Trump was elected to the office of the President in the 2016 election?

**Response:** Donald Trump was certified as the winner of the 2016 presidential election, and thus “elected” President as that word is used in the Twenty-Second Amendment.

- c. Did Trump win a majority of the electoral vote in the 2016 election?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 29.b.

- d. Do you agree that President Trump was elected to the office of the President in the 2024 election?

**Response:** President Trump was certified as the winner of the 2024 presidential election, and thus “elected” President as that word is used in the Twenty-Second Amendment.

- e. Did Trump win a majority of the electoral vote in the 2024 election?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 29.d.

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<sup>3</sup> U.S. CONST. amend. XXII.

- f. Do you agree that the 22nd Amendment, absent a constitutional amendment, prevents President Trump from running for a third presidential term?

**Response:** Because President Trump has twice been “elected to the office of the President,” the Twenty-Second Amendment prevents him from being elected again.

30. Has any official from the White House or the Department of Justice, or anyone else involved in your nomination or confirmation process, instructed or suggested that you not opine on whether any past Supreme Court decisions were correctly decided?

**Response:** Members of the Department of Justice have provided information about the way past nominees have answered similar questions, but I have answered all questions posed to me based on my own independent judgment.

31. Have you spoken or corresponded with Elon Musk since November 2024? If yes, provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

**Response:** No.

32. Have you spoken or corresponded with any member of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) since November 2024? If yes, identify the member(s) and provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

**Response:** No.

33. Have you spoken or corresponded with Stephen Miller since November 2024? If yes, provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

**Response:** No.

34. Have you spoken or corresponded with Chad Mizelle since November 2024? If yes, provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

**Response:** No.

35. Have you spoken or corresponded with Pam Bondi since November 2024? If yes, provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

**Response:** No.

36. Have you spoken or corresponded with Todd Blanche since November 2024? If yes, provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

**Response:** No.

37. Have you spoken or corresponded with Emil Bove since November 2024? If yes, provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

**Response:** No.

38. Have you spoken or corresponded with Leonard Leo since November 2024? If yes, provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

**Response:** No.

39. Have you—personally or through any of your affiliated companies or organizations, agents, or employees—provided financial support or other resources to any members of the Proud Boys or of the Oath Keepers for their legal fees or for other purposes? If yes, state the amount of financial support provided, dates provided, and for what purposes.

**Response:** No.

40. Have you ever spoken or corresponded with any of the following individuals? If yes, provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

- a. Enrique Tarrío
- b. Stewart Rhodes
- c. Kelly Meggs
- d. Kenneth Harrelson
- e. Thomas Caldwell
- f. Jessica Watkins
- g. Roberto Minuta
- h. Edward Vallejo
- i. David Moerschel
- j. Joseph Hackett
- k. Ethan Nordean
- l. Joseph Biggs
- m. Zachary Rehl
- n. Dominic Pezzola
- o. Jeremy Bertino
- p. Julian Khater

**Response:** No.

41. Have you ever spoken or corresponded with any individuals convicted and later pardoned of offenses related to the January 6, 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol? If yes, identify the individual(s) and provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

**Response:** No.

42. Federal judges must file annual financial disclosure reports and periodic transaction reports. If you are confirmed to the federal bench, do you commit to filing these disclosures and to doing so on time?

**Response:** Yes.

43. Article III Project (A3P) “defends constitutionalist judges and the rule of law.” According to Mike Davis, Founder & President of A3P, “I started the Article III Project in 2019 after I helped Trump win the Gorsuch and Kavanaugh fights. We saw then how relentless—and evil—too many of today’s Democrats have become. They’re Marxists who hate America. They believe in censorship. They have politicized and weaponized our justice systems.”<sup>4</sup>

- a. Do you agree with the above statement?

**Response:** As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to comment on public statements made by other people, especially on matters of politics. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canon 5.

- b. Have you discussed any aspect of your nomination to the federal bench with any officials from or anyone directly associated with A3P, or did anyone do so on your behalf? If yes, identify the individual(s) and provide the dates, mode, and content of those discussions and communications.

**Response:** To the best of my knowledge, no one with whom I discussed my nomination is associated with the Article III Project.

44. Since you were first approached about the possibility of being nominated, did anyone associated with the Trump Administration or Senate Republicans provide you guidance or advice about which cases to list on your Senate Judiciary Questionnaire (SJQ)?

- a. If so, who? What advice did they give?

**Response:** No.

- b. Did anyone suggest that you omit or include any particular case or type of case in your SJQ?

**Response:** No.

45. Explain, with particularity, the process whereby you answered these written questions, including whether you personally drafted initial responses and whether anyone helped draft, review, or edit the answers.

**Response:** I prepared these responses on my own, and consulted my records, case law, statutory provisions, the Constitution, and previous Questions for the Record submissions in doing so. After receiving feedback from persons at the Office of Legal Policy at the U.S.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.article3project.org/about>

Department of Justice, I finalized my answers and approved them to be submitted to the Committee.

**Questions for the Record from Senator Alex Padilla  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
"Nominations"**

**June 10, 2026**

**Questions for Angela Veronica Colmenero (U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas):**

1. The following are yes or no questions related to the 2020 election:
  - a. According to Wisconsin's certified 2020 General Election results, did Joe Biden receive more than 19,000 votes more than Donald Trump?

**Response:** Based on public reporting, I understand that state election officials certified that Joe Biden received more popular votes in this state.

- b. According to Pennsylvania's certified 2020 General Election results, did Joe Biden receive more than 80,000 votes more than Donald Trump?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 1.a.

- c. According to Georgia's certified 2020 General Election results, did Joe Biden receive more than 11,000 votes more than Donald Trump?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 1.a.

- d. According to Arizona's certified 2020 General Election results, did Joe Biden receive more than 40,000 votes more than Donald Trump?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 1.a.

- e. According to Nevada's certified 2020 General Election results, did Joe Biden receive more than 20,000 votes more than Donald Trump?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 1.a.

- f. According to Michigan's certified 2020 General Election results, did Joe Biden receive more than 154,000 votes more than Donald Trump?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 1.a.

- g. Are you aware of any evidence that Joe Biden did not win more votes than Donald Trump in each of the states listed above? If so, please explain.

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 1.a. To the extent you are asking about disputes or political statements regarding the 2020 presidential election, it would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to provide such an answer. *See Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.*

2. Some judicial nominees have stated that Joe Biden “legally” won the 2020 election or won the election “as a matter of law.” Setting aside any legal characterization: as a matter of fact, did Joe Biden win the 2020 presidential election?

**Response:** Pursuant to the legal framework set out in the Constitution, Joe Biden was certified as the winner of the 2020 election. To the extent you are asking about disputes or political statements regarding the 2020 presidential election, it would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to provide such an answer. *See Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.*

3. Do you have any reason to believe that the outcome of any state’s presidential vote was impacted by irregularities or fraud? If so, please explain.

**Response:** Congress certified Joe Biden as the winner of the 2020 presidential election. To the extent you are asking about disputes or political statements regarding the 2020 presidential election, it would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to provide such an answer. *See Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.*

4. On January 7, 2021, a joint session of Congress certified 306 electoral votes for Joseph Biden and 232 electoral votes for Donald Trump. Joe Biden received more votes than Donald Trump across 25 states, DC, and NE-02 in the 2020 election.
  - a. Do you have any reason to believe that Congress was wrong to certify each state’s electoral votes?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 2.

5. More than 60 federal and state courts, including courts presided over by judges appointed by Republican presidents, dismissed legal challenges to the 2020 presidential election results for lack of evidence, lack of standing, or lack of merit.
  - a. Do you have any reason to believe that any of those courts reached the wrong conclusion?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 2.

- b. Do you have any reason to believe that any one of those judges -- many of whom were appointed by Republican presidents, including President Trump -- acted improperly or in bad faith in dismissing those challenges?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 2.

6. Have you ever, publicly or in an official capacity, questioned or disparaged: (i) the legitimacy of the 2020 presidential election results; (ii) Congress’s certification of those results; or (iii) any federal or state court ruling rejecting legal challenges to those results? If so, please explain.

**Response:** I have never commented publicly or in an official capacity on (i) the legitimacy of the 2020 presidential election results; (ii) Congress’s certification of those results; or (iii) any federal or state court ruling rejecting legal challenges to those results.

7. Do you believe in a constitutional right to privacy? If so, please explain the constitutional basis for that right.

**Response:** The Supreme Court has held that there is a constitutional right to privacy in certain contexts, including a right to use contraceptives, *see Griswold v. Connecticut*, 381 U.S. 479 (1965) (marital right); *Eisenstadt v. Baird*, 405 U.S. 438 (1972) (individual right), and the right to intimate activity between same-sex partners, *see Lawrence v. Texas*, 539 U.S. 558 (2003).

- a. Do you believe that *Griswold v. Connecticut* was correctly decided?

**Response:** *Griswold* is binding precedent of the Supreme Court. As a judicial nominee, it is generally inappropriate for me to opine on or “grade” Supreme Court decisions.

8. At a recent speaking event at Catholic University, Justice Kavanaugh stated that he considers himself “in many ways, a Bork, Scalia, Rehnquist guy” when discussing his judicial role models. What judges or justices would you consider foundational to your judicial philosophy, and why?

**Response:** I am not familiar with the statement made by Justice Kavanaugh nor the event where the statement was made. However, I would consider the time I spent clerking for the Honorable Allen Joe Fish of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas to be foundational to my judicial philosophy. He modeled respect for the rule of law, how to preside over a case professionally, and how to treat all litigants with dignity and respect.

9. If confirmed, cases involving reproductive rights -- including access to abortion, contraception, and assisted reproductive technology -- may come before you. Do you believe that individuals have any constitutionally protected right to make reproductive healthcare decisions? Please explain.

**Response:** As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to comment on issues that may come before me if I am confirmed. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will fairly and faithfully apply all binding Supreme Court and Fifth Circuit precedent.

10. Judicial clerkships serve several important professional roles. They are a meaningful opportunity for recent law graduates to learn from an experienced mentor, and they serve as an important -- and often necessary -- step toward the highest levels of our legal profession. Too often, students from diverse backgrounds are overlooked for these opportunities despite equivalent qualifications.

- a. Do you believe that diversity at all levels of the federal judiciary is important? Please explain your view.

**Response:** I believe all individuals should have the opportunity to work in the federal judiciary, without regard to race, ethnicity, sex, religion, or any other protected characteristic.

- b. When selecting your law clerks, will you commit to considering qualified applicants from a broad range of backgrounds, including candidates from a variety of law schools, from varying socioeconomic circumstances, and of differing races, ethnicities, religions, gender identities, sexual orientations, and abilities?

**Response:** If confirmed, I will hire law clerks based on merit, without regard to race, ethnicity, sex, religion, or any other protected characteristic.

- c. Will you make your clerkship hiring criteria and application process transparent and accessible to applicants who lack the networks or institutional connections that often drive clerkship hiring?

**Response:** If confirmed, I will use the available resources to identify and select the most qualified clerks based on merit, without regard to race, ethnicity, sex, religion, or any other protected characteristic.

- d. If confirmed, how will you personally ensure diversity among your law clerk classes?

**Response:** If confirmed, I will select clerks based on merit and choose people who exhibit the best legal skills and character for serving in that role.

11. I want to give you an opportunity to discuss your views on the 22<sup>nd</sup> Amendment.

- a. What does the 22<sup>nd</sup> Amendment state?

**Response:** The Twenty-Second Amendment states, in pertinent part, “[n]o person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice, and no person who has held the office of President, or acted as President, for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected President shall be elected to the office of the President more than once.”

- b. Under the text of that amendment, is there any basis on which an individual who has already been elected President twice could lawfully be elected to a third term?

**Response:** No.

- c. Donald Trump was elected President in 2016 and again in 2024. How many times has Donald Trump been elected President?

**Response:** Congress certified Donald Trump as the winner of the election in 2016 and 2024. As a result, he has been elected to the office of President twice.

- d. Are you aware of any provision of the Constitution, federal statute, or judicial precedent that would permit Donald Trump to be elected to a third term?

**Response:** I am unaware of any provision of the Constitution, federal statute, or judicial precedent that would permit someone who has been elected twice to the Presidency to be elected a third time.

- e. If a case came before you challenging the eligibility of any individual to appear on a presidential ballot in violation of the 22nd Amendment and you concluded a candidate was ineligible to run for under that amendment, would you have any hesitation in ruling against them regardless of that individual's political standing or the political consequences of your decision?

**Response:** If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed and such a case was before me, I would faithfully apply the law and consider all the evidence and arguments presented by the parties before issuing a decision. The political standing of the parties or the political consequences of my decision would not impact the conclusion I would reach.

12. If confirmed, cases involving discrimination claims brought by LGBTQ+ individuals under Title VII or other federal civil rights statutes may come before you. Will you commit to treating these individuals with dignity by ensuring that your courtroom is a forum where all LGBTQ+ litigants, witnesses, and counsel are addressed respectfully -- including by use of their correct name and gender identity -- and where their claims receive the same full and fair consideration afforded to all parties?

**Response:** If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I commit to treating all individuals with dignity and respect and to giving all claims that come before me full and fair consideration. I also commit to addressing all individuals respectfully.

13. Do you believe that individuals in immigration removal proceedings, including those who entered the United States without authorization, are entitled to the due process protections guaranteed under the US Constitution? Please explain.

**Response:** The Supreme Court has held that “all ‘persons’ within the United States, including aliens, whether their presence here is lawful, unlawful, temporary, or permanent” are entitled to certain levels of due process. *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 693 (2001).

14. If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring that every person who appears before you is treated with dignity and afforded the full protection of the Constitution and federal law regardless of their immigration status, national origin, or language?

**Response:** If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I commit to treating all parties who appear before me with dignity and respect and to applying all binding Supreme Court and Fifth Circuit precedent.

15. What recourse do you believe is available to a federal judge whose orders are not followed?

**Response:** Litigants are expected to follow court orders issued in a proceeding to which the litigant is a party. Courts have a variety of tools at their disposal for enforcing orders, such as imposing sanctions and the initiation of contempt proceedings.

16. Please identify any publicly accessible social media, blog, forum, or other online account that you have created, maintained, controlled, contributed to, or posted under, on any platform over the past 10 years, if any. Please include any non-private (or any previously non-private) accounts on Twitter/X, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, TikTok, Truth Social, Substack, Reddit, any personal blogs or websites, or any comparable platforms. For each account, please state:

- a. the platform or service;
- b. the username, handle, screen name, and any display name associated with the account;
- c. the approximate dates the account was active;
- d. whether the account was maintained in your own name, under a pseudonym, or anonymously; and
- e. the account’s current status (active, deactivated, deleted, or set to private).

**Response:** I have private social media accounts that I have occasionally used with family and friends. I have disclosed all responsive materials to this Committee through my Senate Judiciary Questionnaire.

17. Since you were first under consideration for this nomination, have you deleted, deactivated, archived, restricted the visibility of, or removed content from any online

account, or directed or requested that anyone do so on your behalf? If so, please identify the account and describe what was changed or removed and when.

**Response:** No.

18. Do you commit to recusing yourself from any matter in which the State of Texas, the Office of the Governor, or the Office of the Attorney General is a party, and that relates to a subject you worked on in either office? Please describe how you would define the scope of that commitment.

**Response:** The recusal statute requires a federal judge to “disqualify himself in any proceedings in which his impartiality might reasonably be questioned.” 28 U.S.C. § 455(a). Subsection (b) then lists additional grounds for recusal, including a specific provision for government attorneys. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will recuse myself from all matters on which I worked on as a lawyer, and I would scrupulously apply the recusal statute, any precedents interpreting it, and any applicable canons of judicial ethics to other matters. I will consult with colleagues and judicial ethics officials as appropriate.

19. Records obtained by American Oversight indicate that in 2025 you discussed with the Trump White House and DHS officials having Texas assist in expanding immigration detention, and that a federal official thanked you for supporting “the administration’s agenda of expanding our detention portfolio nationwide.” Will you recuse yourself from matters related to the detention policies you helped coordinate? If not, please explain.

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 18.

- a. You also served as lead trial counsel in *Texas v. United States*, developing arguments against the DAPA and DACA programs. Does that depth of involvement demonstrate a lack of impartiality towards any future cases involving deferred-action policies? Will you recuse from any DACA, DAPA, or other deferred-action related cases?

**Response:** All judges have personal beliefs, and all former litigators have a record of previous advocacy positions. It is nonetheless incumbent on every judge to put aside his or her personal beliefs and previous clients, and instead to apply the law fairly and faithfully, without regard to persons, prejudice, or politics. If confirmed, I would do so in every case. Moreover, with respect to previous advocacy positions I have taken on behalf of my clients, I would scrupulously apply the recusal standards set forth in 28 U.S.C. § 455, any precedents interpreting it, any applicable canons of judicial ethics, and all pertinent advisory opinions.

- b. Are there any other areas of immigration law in which you believe a reasonable observer could question your impartiality given your record?

**Response:** If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will follow the law and all binding precedent from the Supreme Court and the Fifth Circuit fairly, faithfully, and impartially.

**Senator Peter Welch**  
**Senate Judiciary Committee**  
**Written Questions for Angela Colmenero**  
**Hearing on “Nominations”**  
**Wednesday, June 10, 2026**

1. You stated on your Questionnaire that, since becoming the Deputy Chief of Staff to Governor Greg Abbott, Governor Abbott has been your client and you “focus on immigration, healthcare, child welfare, election integrity, and education matters.”
  - a. Please explain the nature of your work, if any, for Governor Abbott on Executive Order GA-36, which prohibited government entities from mandating masks.

**Response:** I consulted with staff in the Office of the Governor and the Governor regarding this issue. To the extent this question calls for specific information about my legal work for a client, I cannot divulge those details because they are protected by several privileges, including the attorney-client privilege.

- b. Please explain the nature of your work, if any, for Governor Abbott on Operation Lone Star, which, according to the Office of the Texas Governor, transported more than 100,000 migrants to New York City, Chicago, Denver, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, and Los Angeles.

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 1.a.

## Questions for the Record

### Angela Colmenero – Nominee to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Texas

Sen. Adam Schiff (CA)

1. You were appointed by Governor Abbott as Provisional Attorney General in 2023 for several months. What is a provisional attorney general and why were you appointed?

**Response:** The Texas Constitution provides that a state official is “suspended from the exercise of the duties of their office” during the pendency of an impeachment proceeding. Tex. Const. art. XV, § 5. A provisional attorney general is a temporary legal officer appointed to oversee the Texas Attorney General’s Office for a limited time. I was appointed to serve as the Provisional Attorney General of Texas during the impeachment proceedings before the Texas Senate.

- a. What was your role in the impeachment trial of Ken Paxton?

**Response:** I had no role in the impeachment trial.

2. Have you represented any clients in private practice or public service who argued they were the subject of “weaponization” or “lawfare” by the federal government? If so, please list the client name, time frame of your representation, forum where they made this argument, and a summary of their claim of “weaponization” or “lawfare.”

**Response:** Not to my knowledge.

3. You have previously worked on several election-related cases. President Trump has proposed ending mail-in voting nationwide and claims that “the States are merely an ‘agent’ for the Federal Government, as represented by the President of the United States.”
  - a. As a state official, do you agree with President Trump’s statements?

**Response:** As a judicial nominee, it would be inappropriate for me to opine on a political issue or a statement by a political figure or an issue that could come before me, if I am confirmed. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.

4. You advised the Texas Legislature on the 2017 legislation that brought the litigation on SB14, the “strictest voter ID law in the nation,” to a successful conclusion for the State.
  - a. Please describe your advising efforts and responsibilities.

**Response:** My work in this case involved helping to craft and implement the court-ordered interim remedy and advising the Texas Legislature as it codified new legislation modeled after the interim remedy. The Fifth Circuit concluded that Texas’s amended voter identification law was legally permissible. *See Veasey v. Abbott*, 888 F.3d 792 (5th Cir. 2018). To the extent this question calls for specific information about my legal work for a client, I cannot divulge those

details because they are protected by several privileges, including the attorney-client privilege.

- b. How would you characterize your role in crafting and passing this legislation?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 4.a.

- 5. According to your Tillotson & Pinker LLP form biography from 2009, you were a member of the “Steering Committee of the Dallas Lawyers Chapter of the American Constitution Society.”
  - a. Why was this omitted from your questionnaire?

**Response:** During my time as an associate attorney at Lynn Tillotson Pinker & Cox, LLP, I once assisted some firm colleagues in obtaining CLE accreditation for programming hosted by the local chapter of the American Constitution Society, which is how I believe this organization ended up on my firm biography. I did not have any additional involvement in the American Constitution Society, and I was never a formal member (dues paying or otherwise) of the organization or local chapter. Accordingly, I did not believe this limited involvement was responsive to Question 11(a) on my questionnaire.

- b. When did you end your membership?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 5.a.

- c. Why did you end your membership?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 5.a.

- 6. You worked for Governor Greg Abbott for more than 15 years. Will you commit to recuse yourself from cases involving Governor Abbott?

**Response:** The recusal statute requires a federal judge to “disqualify himself in any proceedings in which his impartiality might reasonably be questioned.” 28 U.S.C. § 455(a). Subsection (b) then lists additional grounds for recusal, including a specific provision for government attorneys. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will recuse myself from all matters on which I worked on as a lawyer, and I would scrupulously apply the recusal statute, any precedents interpreting it, and any applicable canons of judicial ethics to other matters. I will consult with colleagues and judicial ethics officials as appropriate.

- a. Do you consider Governor Abbott a mentor?

**Response:** I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work for someone who models energetic public service and has a deep respect for the rule of law.

7. You have previously assisted Governor Abbott with the judicial-appointment process, reviewing applications, interviewing candidates, and providing counsel to the Governor regarding candidates.

- a. What qualities did you look for in potential appointees?

**Response:** While the Governor is the decisionmaker when it comes to appointing an individual to fill a judicial vacancy, attorneys within the Office of the Governor assist in the process by identifying and interviewing the most qualified applicants for those vacancies. We looked for individuals who possess significant legal experience, a commitment to the rule of law, and a desire to serve in the judiciary.

- b. Did you or Governor Abbott have any litmus test for judicial nominees?

**Response:** No.

- c. How has this experience informed your approach to the judicial nomination process?

**Response:** I have deep respect for individuals who are willing to be considered for judicial positions at any level. Additionally, because I have seen how much time and attention goes into the process to select the most qualified candidates for judicial vacancies, I have great confidence in the state of the judiciary.

8. While you were in law school, you joined an amicus brief in *Grutter v. Bollinger*. In that brief, you urged the Supreme Court to uphold the Sixth Circuit’s judgment that the government has a compelling interest in promoting diversity in higher education through race-based affirmative action programs.

- a. Do you still hold this view?

**Response:** My ethical obligations as a judicial nominee prohibit me from discussing my current policy or political views. Every day, I set aside my own views and advocate the interests of my clients. If I were to be confirmed as a judge, I would likewise set aside any views that I have now or may develop. Additionally, I would faithfully apply binding Supreme Court and Fifth Circuit precedent in all cases that came before me, including precedent concerning the prohibition on race-conscious admissions programs, such as *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*, 600 U.S. 181 (2023).

9. During your tenure as Provisional Attorney General, the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) issued statements supporting restrictions to abortions and opposing gender-affirming care. One statement, released on August 25 and September 1, 2025, declared, “The OAG will continue to enforce the laws duly enacted by the Texas Legislature and uphold the values of the people of Texas by doing everything in its power to protect children from damaging, unproven ‘gender transition’ interventions.”

- a. Please explain this statement.

**Response:** The statements you referenced above relate to a case where the Texas Attorney General’s Office had a duty to represent the interests of the State and State defendants, which includes the duty to defend the laws passed by the Texas Legislature. While all former litigators have records of previous advocacy positions, it is incumbent on every judge to put aside his or her personal beliefs and previous clients, and instead to apply the law fairly and faithfully, without regard to persons, prejudice, or politics. If confirmed, I would do so in every case. To the extent this question calls for a response expressing an opinion on a legal issue or a matter of political controversy, it would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to offer a view. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.

10. Have you ever made any campaign contributions?

**Response:** No.

- a. If so, please list the candidate and year the donation was made.

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 10.

11. How would you define judicial activism?

**Response:** Judicial activism is when a judge makes decisions based on personal policy preferences rather than faithful adherence to the Constitution and laws.

12. Justice Thomas has argued that a judge has a constitutional duty to overrule past Supreme Court precedent if it is “demonstrably erroneous,” regardless of stare decisis.

- a. Do you agree with Justice Thomas’ argument?

**Response:** The decision to overrule Supreme Court precedent resides with the justices of the Supreme Court. If confirmed as a district court judge, I would have no role in that decision. As a lower court judge, I would be bound to fairly and faithfully follow all binding Supreme Court and Fifth Circuit precedent. To the extent this question calls for a response expressing an opinion on a legal issue or a matter of political controversy, it would be inappropriate for me, as a judicial nominee, to offer a view. *See* Code of Conduct for United States Judges, Canons 3(A)(6), 5.

- b. Why or why not?

**Response:** Please see my answer to Question 12.a.

13. How would you define public corruption as a matter of federal law?

**Response:** I am unaware of a single definition of public corruption under federal law. This term may include bribery, extortion, fraud, and embezzlement of or by elected or appointed officials, government employees, and people doing business with government.

- a. If one of your law clerks used their position to give or steer money to their friends, would you consider that public corruption?

**Response:** Yes.

14. Do you agree that judgments, rather than the legal reasoning included in those judgments, bind parties?

**Response:** For the parties in a case, the final judgment is what is formally binding, not the legal reasoning.

- a. If so, how would you distinguish between the scope of a judgment and the legal reasoning behind it when determining if a party before you is bound by a prior decision?

**Response:** The scope of a final judgment determines the rights, remedies, and obligations of the specific parties involved. The legal reasoning supporting the final judgment serves as precedent for future parties that may come before the court.

15. What is the legal standard for determining “threat” under federal criminal law?

**Response:** Under federal criminal law, “[t]rue threats are serious expressions conveying that a speaker means to commit an act of unlawful violence.” *Counterman v. Colorado*, 600 U.S. 66, 74 (2023). “The inquiry is twofold: whether a reasonable person would perceive the statement as threatening, and whether the speaker was subjectively aware of its threatening nature.” *United States v. Jubert*, 139 F.4th 484, 491 (5th Cir. 2025) (citing *Counterman*, 600 U.S. at 72–73).

16. Do you agree that Article III courts are courts of limited subject-matter jurisdiction?

**Response:** Yes. Under the Constitution, federal courts can only hear specific categories of “cases” and “controversies” explicitly authorized by Article III and further defined by Congress. For example, Congress has conferred jurisdiction on federal courts to resolve cases “arising under” federal law. 28 U.S.C. § 1331. Congress has also given federal courts power to decide diversity cases between citizens of different states where the amount in controversy exceeds a certain statutory threshold. *Id.* § 1332(a)

17. Have you ever had improper prosecutorial communications of a substantive nature with jurors outside of the jury room?

**Response:** No.

18. Have you ever excused jurors who disagreed with your case deliberations?

**Response:** No.

19. How would you describe your judicial philosophy?

**Response:** If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, my judicial philosophy would be to faithfully and fully carry out the Article III duties of a judge on an “inferior court” to the “one [S]upreme Court.” *See* U.S. Const. art. III. As a district court judge, I would fairly and faithfully apply all binding precedent from the Supreme Court and the Fifth Circuit. To the extent there is no binding precedent, I would endeavor to use the modes of judicial reasoning set forth by the Supreme Court, particularly textualism and originalism.