

Senate Judiciary Committee
“Nominations”
Questions for the Record
March 7, 2018
Senator Amy Klobuchar

Questions for District Court Nominees

[For Mari Dooley, Nominee to be United States District Judge for the District of Connecticut; Dominic Lanza, Nominee to be United States District Judge for the District of Arizona; and Jill Otake, Nominee to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii]

- You all have experience working as an Assistant U.S. Attorney. As a former prosecutor, I would like to ask: What have you learned from your experience as a prosecutor, and how has that experience prepared you to serve as a federal judge?

I learned many valuable lessons during my time as a federal prosecutor. Perhaps the most important lesson was the need to represent the facts and the law fairly and accurately to the Court and opposing counsel. The prosecutor’s role is to do justice, not simply to win at all costs, and a prosecutor who misstates the facts or the law in an attempt to gain an advantage in a particular case violates this fundamental precept. Similarly, federal judges are duty-bound to fairly and impartially ascertain and apply the law, regardless of their personal views.

Another lesson I learned as a federal prosecutor was the necessity of treating everybody involved in the legal process—from judges to jurors to court staff to opposing counsel to defendants—with courtesy, dignity, patience, and respect. It is important that federal judges display similar qualities.

- How would you view the importance of adhering to precedent – even precedent where you felt that the case was wrongly decided – if you are confirmed as a federal judge?

If confirmed as a district judge, I will faithfully apply and adhere to all applicable precedent. As the Supreme Court explained in *Hutto v. Davis*, 454 U.S. 370, 375 (1982) (per curiam): “[U]nless we wish anarchy to prevail within the federal judicial system, a precedent of this Court must be followed by the lower federal courts no matter how misguided the judges of those courts may think it to be.”