

May 8, 2019

Dear Senator,

On behalf of Alliance for Justice (AFJ), a national association representing 130 groups committed to justice and civil rights, I write to oppose the confirmation of [Brantley D. Starr](#) to the District Court for the Northern District of Texas.

Starr is currently the Deputy First Attorney General of Texas, a position he has held since 2015. In this role, Starr has fought rights for immigrants, LGBTQ Americans, and women, and he has worked to undermine climate protections. There is nothing in his record to suggest he will be a fair, unbiased jurist should he be confirmed.

Starr has been an integral part of Texas's attacks on immigrants. He defended President Trump's discriminatory Muslim Ban and advocated blocking the entry of Syrian refugees and refugees from other Muslim-majority countries into Texas. Starr also led the fight to eliminate protections for Dreamers. And he argued for limiting the ability of local authorities to determine how best to use law enforcement resources to force local law enforcement to enforce federal immigration law.

Moreover, Starr has been at the forefront of Texas's efforts to undermine LGBTQ equality. He led Texas's efforts to block federal guidance that protected transgender students under Title IX. Following *Obergefell v. Hodges*, Starr signed an opinion letter claiming that despite the Supreme Court establishing what he referred to as a "new constitutional right," civil servants, including clerks, judges, and justices of the peace, could refuse to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples. Starr also supported a Texas House bill that advocates explained would allow groups "to discriminate," allowing them to "refuse to place foster children with gay couples or families with different religious backgrounds"

Starr's record on women's health and reproductive rights is no better. Starr advocated for defunding Planned Parenthood, threatening funding for physical exams, contraception, screening for breast cancer and screening for cervical cancer for low-income women. Starr also argued for aggressive prosecution of women and medical professionals under Texas's restrictive abortion laws. Moreover, Starr testified in support of a so-called "TRAP" law. The bill aimed to restrict access to reproductive care by imposing harsh and medically unnecessary requirements on abortion care providers. In his defense of the law, Starr argued that it "is not a health law or a medical law. It's a dignity or respect of life law." Starr also defended a Texas law criminalizing a vital, safer abortion procedure for women who need to terminate their pregnancy during the second trimester, in *Whole Woman's Health v. Paxton*.

On issues relating to voting rights, Starr has fought to defend restrictive voter ID laws, propagated harmful and false rhetoric about voter fraud, and defended Texas against lawsuits arguing that Texas redistricting plans violated the Constitution and Voting Rights Act by intentionally diluting the votes of African-American and Latino communities in *Abbott v. Perez*.

With respect to voting rights, reports indicate that Starr falsely testified before a Texas Senate hearing that a deceased judge's name had been found on voting rolls after his death, certainly raising concerns regarding his veracity.

Given these concerns, and as detailed in our [AFJ Nominee Snapshot](#) on Starr's record issued prior to his hearing, Alliance for Justice strongly opposes his confirmation to a lifetime seat on the federal bench. The Committee should reject Brantley Starr's nomination for the Northern District of Texas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nan Aron". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nan" and the last name "Aron" clearly distinguishable.

Nan Aron