



PRESIDENT  
NAN ARON

CHAIR  
PAULETTE MEYER

July 29, 2020

Dear Senator,

On behalf of Alliance for Justice (AFJ), a national association representing over 120 groups committed to equal justice, I write to oppose the confirmation of two nominees to the United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois, David Dugan and Stephen McGlynn. AFJ has concerns that, if confirmed, both will fail to protect some of our nation's most important rights, including the right to an abortion.

David Dugan has expressed hostility towards the settled legal precedent protecting reproductive rights. When he ran for a state court judgeship, he filled out a [survey](#) for Illinois Right to Life Action. He wrote, "the case of Roe v. Wade is sorely misplaced." Dugan expressed his belief that the Illinois Constitution, does not "provide[] a sound basis for expansion of the right to privacy" to include the right to decide to have an abortion. He is deeply involved with anti-abortion organizations, including [Illinois Vision 2020](#), whose mission is "ending abortion in Illinois." He served as president and legal counsel of Options-Now Medical Pregnancy Center, a [fake](#) health-care center which spreads misinformation about reproductive health services. Notably, Dugan was a member of the Alliance Defending Freedom, which the Southern Poverty Law Center ]designated a [hate group](#).

Stephen McGlynn's record also demonstrates that he will not protect and uphold rights to reproductive health and freedom. He is a former member of Illinois Federation Right to Life, a [group](#) that describes itself as "working to end abortion" since 1973. In his capacity as a chairman of the Illinois Republican Party he was the primary author of the [party platform](#), which stated as a central plank: "To protect the fundamental right to life and dignity of every human life including the lives of unborn children." The platform also asserted: "From the first beat of a heart to the last breath drawn, we recognize each individual's dignity and worth. Government is obligated, by law and by deed, to protect and defend each individual's right to life, not only from government action, but also against a threat from another.... Government must defend and protect those who by age, disability or other affliction cannot protect themselves. This includes the protection of the unborn child."

As one Illinois conservative and friend of McGlynn's [noted](#) in 2008, "I regarded it then – and regard it now – as the most comprehensively pro-life platform in the nation." McGlynn was credited with

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“defining the unborn as a human person entitled to all the protections of the constitution throughout the document.” He was [critical](#) of President Obama as “so outrageously pro choice.”

McGlynn also [criticized](#) the Supreme Court’s rulings in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, calling it “a full frontal assault on people’s religious liberties.” Indeed, he expressed his anti-LGBTQ equality views in the 2004 Illinois Republican Party platform, where he [wrote](#): “Our laws should strongly support and celebrate the loving commitment a man and a woman make to each other in marriage.... No device, whether by judicial fiat or by the exercise of the powers of office, should be allowed to infringe upon the sanctity of marriage.”

Given their demonstrated opposition to critical constitutional rights, Alliance for Justice opposes the confirmations of David Dugan and Stephen McGlynn to lifetime seats on the federal bench.

Sincerely,



Nan Aron  
President