

Hawaii

# Hirono: Gorsuch Has Pattern Of Ignoring 'The Little Guy'

The Hawaii senator told the Supreme Court nominee, “For me, this hearing is about the people in this country who are getting screwed every single second, minute, and hour of the day.”

16

---

By Chad Blair    / March 20, 2017

Share 899

Share 5

---

U.S. Sen. Mazie Hirono is not holding back on her concerns about President Donald Trump’s nominee to the highest court in the land.

The Hawaii senator, a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, on Monday referenced several cases in which Judge Neil Gorsuch appeared to favor businesses over individuals.

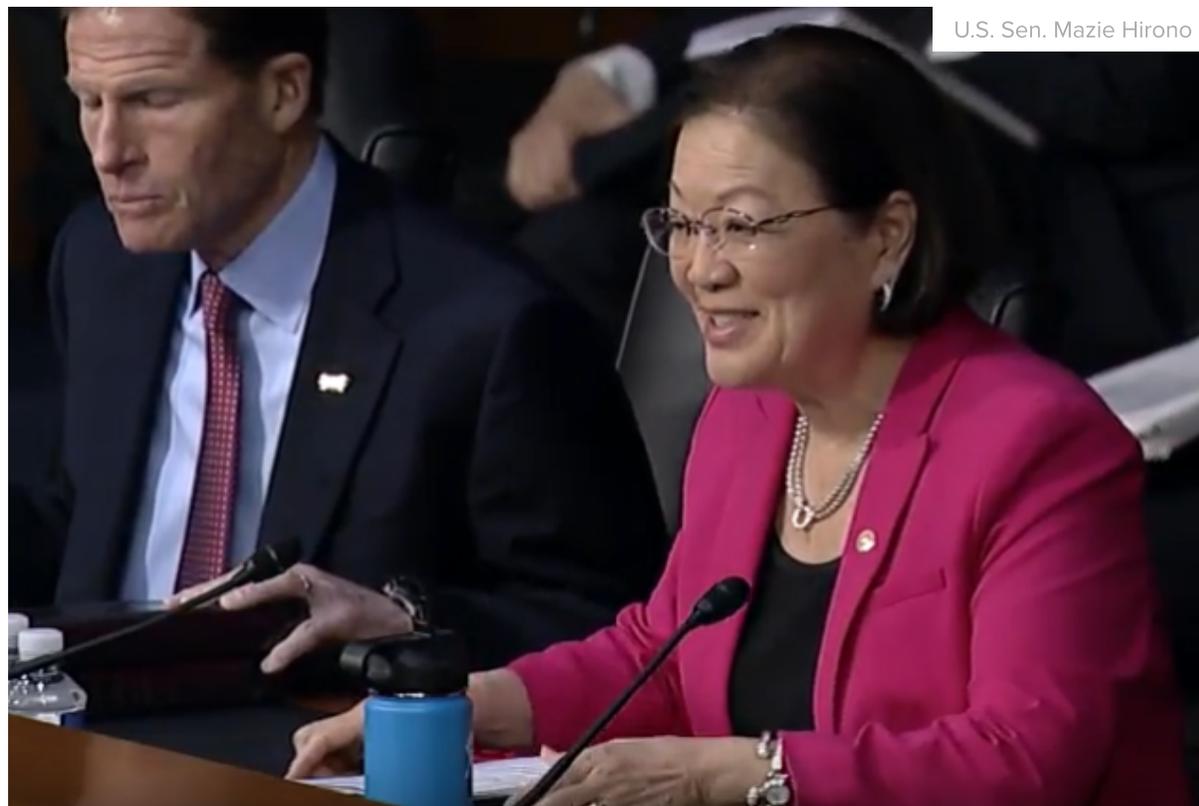
It was a criticism that [other senators made as well](#) at a confirmation hearing in Washington, D.C.

Other Democrats expressed concerns that Gorsuch would be a “rubber stamp” to a president whose administration has “asserted that executive power is not subject to judicial review,” [as one senator put it](#).

For her part, Hirono reviewed the legal opinions of Gorsuch and told him, “I have not seen that the rights of minorities are a priority for you. In fact, a

pattern jumps out at me, you rarely seem to find in favor of the 'little guy.'”

The senator, a Democrat, said she is concerned about the working poor, Muslim Americans who are the victims of hate crimes, preserving the choice of women in health care and protecting the rights of gays and lesbians.



Sen. Hirono addressed Judge Neal Gorsuch at his confirmation hearing Monday in Washington.

“For me, this hearing is about the people in this country who are getting screwed every single second, minute, and hour of the day,” she told Gorsuch. “I got into public service to help these people. And my questions over the coming days will draw on their experience, as well as my own.”

Hirono also told Gorsuch that, as an immigrant from Japan, her family did not have to take a religious test to be allowed into the country.

“If President Eisenhower pursued the same policies President Trump would like to, it’s very possible I wouldn’t be here today,” said Hirono, 69.

She added, “In our courtesy meeting, you said you have a heart. So, Judge Gorsuch, we need to know what’s in your heart.”

## An Extended Vacancy

Gorsuch, 49, would succeed the late Justice Antonin Scalia if confirmed by the Senate. He was appointed to the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals by former President George W. Bush in 2006.

The confirmation hearings of Gorsuch resume Tuesday. Republicans have a 52-48 majority in the Senate (two independents side with Democrats).

Democrats could push to raise [the required threshold to 60 votes](#), but the GOP could then use the so-called “nuclear option” to change the rules to allow a simple majority vote.

The nine-member Supreme Court has had a vacancy since the death of Scalia over a year ago. The GOP-controlled Senate refused to consider the nomination of Judge Merrick Garland, who was named by President Barack Obama, a Democrat.

*Senator Hirono's remarks on Judge Gorsuch:*

### Senator Hirono Supreme Court Nomination Opening Statement



Hawaii's other senator, Democrat Brian Schatz, does not sit on Senate Judiciary.

But he will be voting on Gorsuch when the nomination comes before the full Senate.

At the time of Gorsuch's [nomination in late January](#), Schatz said:

*"I am disappointed the President has nominated someone who does not appear committed to ensuring these rights and who is outside of the legal mainstream. Judge Gorsuch was picked from a list provided to President Trump when he was a candidate. This list was curated by the Heritage Foundation, an organization dedicated to advancing a radical agenda of the diminishment of individual and civil rights.*

*"Judge Gorsuch has consistently ruled in favor of corporations over individuals, has undermined women's rights, and has failed to protect workers from discrimination. I will continue to study his record, and I will pay close attention to his hearing. But this was a missed opportunity to select a mainstream judge who could have garnered bipartisan support."*

Follow Civil Beat on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). You can also sign up for Civil Beat's free [daily newsletter](#).

## About the Author



Chad Blair [Twitter](#) [Email](#) [RSS](#)

Chad Blair is a reporter for Civil Beat. You can reach him by email at [cblair@civilbeat.org](mailto:cblair@civilbeat.org) or follow him on Twitter at [@chadblairCB](https://twitter.com/chadblairCB).

[Use the RSS feed to subscribe to Chad Blair's posts today](#)

SHOW COMMENTS



## IGNORANCE IS ~~BLISS~~ TOXIC.

Get Civil Beat's free morning newsletter to stay informed.

SIGN ME UP!

And don't worry, we hate spam too! You can unsubscribe any time.