

Biden Nominates Son-in-Law of Lawmaker for Lower Court Position



President Joe Biden has renominated Jabari Wamble, a former Kansas prosecutor, to become a district court judge in Kansas. Last year, Wamble was nominated by Biden to a seat on a federal appeals court, but his nomination had lapsed with the end of the prior Congress. While the White House did not renominate the two other judicial nominees whose nominations had lapsed, it did not rule out renominating Wamble.

Wamble, the son-in-law of Democratic Representative Emanuel Cleaver of Missouri, was picked by Biden in August to become the first Black judge from Kansas on the Denver-based 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. However, he is now being nominated to become a district court judge in Kansas after "further consideration and conversation with Mr. Wamble regarding his interests and experience," according to a White House official. The official added that the President is proud to put Wamble forward and believes he would be an excellent addition to the federal bench in Kansas.

Biden has nominated 157 federal judicial nominees since taking office in January 2021. Most of the nominees have been women and people of color, in keeping with a pledge to diversify the federal judiciary.

Wamble, a federal prosecutor since 2011, is married to Marissa Cleaver, the daughter of Kansas City congressman Emanuel Cleaver, who was an early supporter of Biden in his 2020 presidential campaign. However, neither Cleaver's office nor Wamble responded to requests for comment.

Last year, the Senate Judiciary Committee did not take up Wamble's 10th Circuit nomination before it lapsed. As a district court nominee, his nomination will be subject to a committee requirement that his two home state senators return "blue slips" supporting his nomination for him to be considered. Republican Senator Jerry Moran of Kansas spoke positively of Wamble last year, saying he had "demonstrated legal skill and interest in justice throughout his professional career." However, fellow Republican Senator Roger Marshall never committed to supporting him, telling the Kansas City Star in January that he was waiting to see how the American Bar Association approached Wamble. The association has yet to rate him.

In addition to Wamble, Biden has nominated Colorado-based U.S. Magistrate Judge Kato Crews to a district court position and Molly Silfen, an associate solicitor in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, to a 15-year term on the U.S. Court of Federal Claims.

REFERENCES:

Biden nominates lawmaker's son-in-law to bench again, but to lower court