

Democrats caution colleagues against rushing to judge Alito

ALITO • CONTINUED FROM 1

mind on Alito after discussing the right to privacy and other constitutional issues with him Tuesday. "Not surprisingly, it's hard to draw hard and fast conclusions on how he will vote," Johnson said. "There is no question he is a conservative."

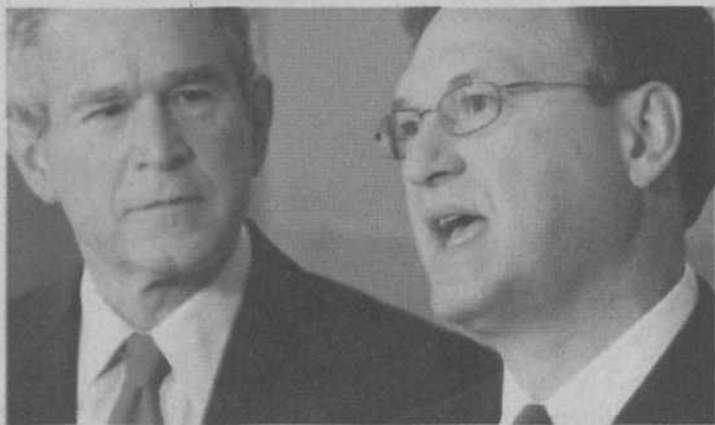
Democratic leaders are cautioning their colleagues against rushing to judgment on President Bush's pick to replace his previous unsuccessful choice, White House counsel Harriet Miers, as the successor for retiring Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.

"Ordinarily it takes six to eight weeks to evaluate a Supreme Court nominee. We shouldn't rush to judgment," Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., the No. 2 Senate Democrat, said on CBS' "The Early Show."

DeWine, who met with Alito for more than an hour, is one of the 14 centrist senators Democrats need to sustain a filibuster. Without the group's seven Republicans, Democrats would not be able to prevent Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, R-Tenn., from abolishing judicial filibusters and confirming judges with a simple majority vote. The Republicans hold 55 of the 100 seats in the Senate.

DeWine made clear Tuesday that a Democratic filibuster would not have his support, saying he didn't see how "anyone would think that this would constitute what our group of 14 termed 'extraordinary circumstances' that would justify a filibuster."

"This is a nomination of a judge who is clearly within the



President Bush watches judge Samuel Alito, right, speak after he announced Alito as his new nominee for the Supreme Court.

mainstream of conservative thought," he added.

The so-called "Gang of 14" will hold its first meeting on Alito Thursday.

The White House on Tuesday named former Indiana Republican Sen. Dan Coats and former Republican Party chairman Ed Gillespie to help guide Alito through his confirmation process. The two served in the same capacity for Miers, who withdrew her nomination last week after some conservatives refused to fully support her candidacy and questioned whether she was qualified.

Conservatives are much more comfortable with Alito than they were with Miers because of his conservative track record as a federal judge, prosecutor and a Reagan administration lawyer. Miers had never been a judge.

The nomination got Bush on the good side again of conservative and anti-abortion groups, who declared Alito a winner after opposing Miers.

James Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family Action, said he was "extremely pleased," and the anti-abortion

Operation: Rescue declared that the country was on "the fast-track to derailing Roe v. Wade as the law of the land."

Bush, who has seen his standing eroded by Iraq, rising fuel prices, hurricane mistakes and the indictment of a top aide to Vice President Dick Cheney, emphasized Alito's work on "thousands of appeals" and "hundreds of opinions."

Alito pledged to uphold the duty of a judge to "interpret the Constitution and the laws faithfully and fairly."

Democrats are deeply suspicious of Alito, with Sen. Harry Reid of Nevada, the party's leader, wondering aloud "why those who want to pack the court with judicial activists are so much more enthusiastic about him" than Miers.

Alito upheld a requirement for spousal notification in an abortion case more than a decade ago, although Senate Judiciary Chairman Arlen Specter — an abortion rights Republican — insisted that doesn't mean Alito would rule to overturn Roe v. Wade, the 1973 ruling that established abortion rights.

Born 1950

Princeton University, A.B., 1972

Nominee No. 2

President Bush's new nominee for the Supreme Court, Samuel Alito, has 15 years experience as a federal appeals court judge.

Third Circuit*

PA. N.J. DEL.

Washington, D.C.

* Also includes U.S. Virgin Islands

Yale Law School, J.D., 1975

New Haven

Trenton

U.S. Attorney for the District of New Jersey

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit

One of 14 appellate court judges in the circuit

Alito

Oct. 31: Nominated for associate justice position

Law clerk, Hon. Leonard I. Garth, U.S. Court of Appeals, Third Circuit	Assistant U.S. attorney, District of New Jersey	Assistant to the U.S. solicitor general, Department of Justice	Deputy assistant U.S. attorney general, Department of Justice
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Some noteworthy appeals court opinions

YEAR	CASE	ALITO'S POSITION
1991	Planned Parenthood v. Casey	Dissented in the case that struck down a Pennsylvania law requiring women who sought abortions to notify their spouses
1996	Homar v. Gilbert	Wrote dissent that a state university didn't violate the due process rights of a campus police officer when they suspended him without pay after learning he had been arrested on drug charges
1999	Fraternal Order of Police v. City of Newark	Wrote majority opinion that Muslim officers could keep their beards; the city had made an exception for medical reasons, but not religious ones

SOURCES: Federal Judicial Center; USCourts.gov; Villanova University School of Law

AP

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We love our new ZTA babies!

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| Grace Aimar | Catherine Foote | Jessica Nanney |
| Carly Bland | Jean Foxworth | Jericha Nichols |
| Elizabeth Blanton | Jennifer Franke | Mary Rasa |
| Caroline Boineau | Katherine Freemon | Ashley Richter |
| Laura Bolos | Brittany Goodridge | Nancy Sharp |
| Andrea Bondio | Madison Horne | Mallory Shealy |
| Lauren Bostic | Katherine Hudson | Jewell Singleton |
| Melissa Brangwynne | Haley Keisler | Tori Smith |
| Erica Branson | Donna Kim | Courtney Sterling |
| Kathleen Budds | Andrea Lindler | Randan Swindler |
| Samantha Cheek | Jessica Lown | Jade Swords |
| Courtney Cockfield | Kate Macary | Leslie Tanenbaum |
| Jillian Cody | Stephanie Marshall | Sarah Waller |
| Brittany Cumalander | Laralane McCain | Cady West |
| Heather Daraza | Molly McCrary | Katye White |
| Ariana Dedianko | Gray McGurn | Hannah Wilson |
| Katherine Edge | Halle Mehalic | Nikki Zimmer |

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