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DC's Chief Judges Met with White House Counsel's Office; Progress Made Regarding Judicial Vacancies

WASHINGTON, DC - Chief Judge Anna Blackburne-Rigsby of the DC Court of Appeals, and Chief Judge Robert Morin of DC Superior Court, met with White House Counsel's Office staff last week and reported the meeting was productive and encouraging. The White House sent two more nominations to the US Senate for consideration last week and a hearing was recently scheduled for April 2 on the nominations of James Crowell IV and Jason Park.

"We appreciated the opportunity to speak directly to White House Counsel, to explain the impact our vacancies are having on the administration of justice in the District of Columbia, not just theoretically, but in terms of how the average person in the District is impacted by the lack of a full complement of judges," said Chief Judge Anna Blackburne-Rigsby. The DC Courts are intricately involved in the life of the community, serving all people who live, work and do business in the District. We strive to deliver justice as fairly, impartially and expeditiously as is possible; vacancies hinder the timely delivery of justice."

The Chief Judges shared some of the challenges faced in the administration of justice and the impact that the vacancies are having on the administration of justice and public safety, business community and people who live, work and do business in the District of Columbia.

"The meeting was productive and we explained what having so many vacancies meant. Over the past several years we have made great strides in enhancing the mediation programs we offer, expanding self-help opportunities and increasing the level of volunteerism by members of the DC Bar. All of those efforts have resulted in much greater access to justice, but fundamentally, people deserve their day in court in a timely fashion," said Chief Judge Morin.

The two chief judges will deliver their State of the Judiciary remarks, as required by law, at the biennial Judicial Conference at the Ronald Reagan International Trade Center on April 12, 2019. Esther Lim, President of the DC Bar, will deliver State of the Bar remarks, and the conference will cover a wide range of topics related to the theme: Children and the Law. For more information, see <https://www.dcbar.org/about-the-bar/annual-events/judicial-and-bar-conference.cfm>. The State of the Judiciary remarks will be live-streamed for the first time on the DC Courts' website and via the Courts' Facebook page starting at 9am on April 12.

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