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United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

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NEWS RELEASE

October 12, 2018

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Senate Confirms Idaho Attorney Ryan D. Nelson to Seat on Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals

SAN FRANCISCO – The United States Senate has confirmed President Trump’s nomination of attorney Ryan Douglas Nelson of Idaho Falls, Idaho, to serve as a judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. Senators gave their consent on Thursday by a vote of 51-44.

Judge Nelson, who is expected to maintain chambers in Idaho, was nominated to the court on May 10, 2018. After appearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee on July 11, 2018, his nomination was reported to the Senate floor on September 13, 2018. He fills a judgeship vacant since August 11, 2018, when Judge N. Randy Smith of Pocatello, Idaho, assumed senior status.

Prior to his appointment to the bench, Judge Nelson has served as general counsel of Melaleuca, Inc., based in Idaho Falls since 2009. He served previously as special counsel for U.S. Supreme Court nominations to the Ranking Member of the Senate Judiciary Committee in 2009. He also served as deputy general counsel to the White House Office of Management and Budget, from 2008 to 2009, and deputy assistant attorney general in the Environment and Natural Resources Division of the U.S. Department of Justice from 2006 to 2008. Earlier in his career, Mr. Nelson engaged in private practice in the Washington, D.C., office of Sidley Austin LLP from 2001 to 2006.

Born in Idaho Falls, Judge Nelson received his B.A. from Brigham Young University in 1996 and his J.D. from BYU Law School in 1999, graduating with honors and inducted into the Order of the Coif. While in law school, he was a lead articles editor of the BYU Law Review.

Following law school, he served as a law clerk to Judge Karen LeCraft Henderson of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, from 1999 to 2000, and to Judges Charles N. Brower and Richard M. Mosk of the Iran-U.S. Claims Tribunal at The Hague from 2000 to 2001.

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The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals hears appeals of cases decided by executive branch agencies and federal trial courts in nine western states and two Pacific Island jurisdictions. The court normally meets monthly in Seattle, Washington; San Francisco, California; and Pasadena, California; every other month in Portland, Oregon; three times per year in Honolulu, Hawaii; and twice a year in Anchorage, Alaska.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit had 11,096 new case filings in fiscal year 2017. The court is authorized 29 judgeships and currently has six vacancies.

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