

Court Information Release



Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division
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U.S. Senate Confirms Nomination of John F. Kness as U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois

On February 12, 2020, the United States Senate confirmed the nomination of John F. Kness as U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois.

“We are delighted by the news that the Senate has confirmed John Kness for a seat on our court. Mr. Kness’ practice experience in both civil and criminal matters, and his history of public service demonstrate that he will serve our district well,” said Chief Judge Rebecca R. Pallmeyer.

Judge-Designate Kness is currently the General Counsel of the College of DuPage, where he oversees all legal matters at the second-largest institution of higher learning in the State of Illinois. Prior to becoming General Counsel, Mr. Kness served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Northern District of Illinois, with assignments in the National Security and Cybercrimes, Narcotics, and General Crimes Sections. Judge-Designate Kness also served as a law clerk to Judge William H. Pryor Jr., of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit. Mr. Kness earned his undergraduate degree at Northwestern University and performed for several years as a professional musician before returning to Northwestern for his law degree. Judge-Designate Kness also served as a patrol officer for the Oak Park Police Department before attending law school.

On June 24, 2019, the President nominated John Kness to fill the U.S. District Court judgeship previously held by Samuel Der-Yeghiayan, who retired on February 17, 2018. Judge-Designate Kness received a hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee on July 17, 2019.

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