

# MPR NEWS

## Politics Friday: Supreme Court seat opens up and controversial pipeline wins approval

[Politics](#) - [Mike Mulcahy](#) · Jun 29, 2018



U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Anthony Kennedy administering the judicial oath to Judge Neil Gorsuch during a ceremony in the Rose Garden at the White House April 10, 2017, in Washington, DC. *Chip Somodevilla | Getty Images*

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It's our weekly look at Minnesota politics.

First up: Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy said he will step down at the end of July, leaving another vacancy on the court to be filled by President Trump.

The confirmation battle will be tough, with Democrats pushing to delay a vote until after the November election and President Trump and the Republicans determined to press ahead. All that will have implications for this year's election around the country, including in Minnesota.

Two guests: Washington University political science professor [Steven Smith](#) and University of Minnesota law professor [Heidi Kitrosser](#) joined MPR host Mike Mulcahy to look at the political implications of Kennedy's announcement.

Then: Pipeline protesters geared up for a fight after a big decision by Minnesota regulators on Thursday. The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission approved the controversial Line 3 replacement pipeline along a new route across the state. The commissioners voted unanimously to grant Enbridge Energy a "certificate of need" for the project. MPR reporter Elizabeth Dunbar joined the program with the latest on that story.

Plus: We hear from Republican Congressman Jason Lewis as he campaigns for a second term.

And finally: MPR reporters Brian Bakst and Briana Bierschbach joined Mike Mulcahy for a look back at the rest of the week's political news.

About the author

[Mike Mulcahy](#)  
Political Editor  
[mmulcahy@mpr.org](mailto:mmulcahy@mpr.org)

Mike Mulcahy is the political editor at MPR News.