President Donald Trump nominated Judge Neil Gorsuch, an extreme, out-of-the-mainstream judge, to fill a vacant seat on the Supreme Court of the United States, the highest court in the country.

Judge Gorsuch has proven himself hostile to environmental protection and cannot be trusted to protect our air, our water, or our communities. His record shows he would prioritize his extreme ideological views over the health and safety of our environment and the American people. It shows he would limit the access of everyday Americans to the courts and prevent agencies like the United States Environment Protection Agency (EPA) from fulfilling their mission and doing their job to protect our air, water, and health.

As members of the highest court in the country, Supreme Court Justices must be fair, even-handed, and uphold the sanctity of our environmental laws and Constitution before their own personal ideology or the wealthy and powerful. An independent Supreme Court is the final safeguard against abuses of power by the president and Congress. Unfortunately, Judge Neil Gorsuch, doesn’t meet that standard. His judicial philosophy shuns environmental advocates from having their day in court. This is a dangerous view that will favor polluters and industry over the rights of the people.

Judge Gorsuch’s troubling record also includes *Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc. v. Sebelius*, a case ruling that corporations are persons and should not be required to pay for contraceptive coverage under the Affordable Care Act. Hand-picked by the Federalist Society and the Heritage Foundation, right-wing organizations funded by oil billionaires Charles and David Koch, he’s even been described as more extreme than Justice Antonin Scalia.

Justices have the final say on cases that shape every facet of our daily lives, from landmark environmental protections such as the Clean Power Plan to civil liberty protections such as the Voting Rights Act to basic rights like allowing women to control their bodies with *Roe v. Wade*. Judge Gorsuch’s record of extreme positions proves he is far too outside of the mainstream for this critically important position. In order to protect our environment, we must protect our democracy. And that means having three functioning branches of government where the people’s interests are represented.

We can’t let our Supreme Court open the door to big polluters, corporate interests, and attacks on women’s and human rights. For decades, concerned community members have rallied, signed official public comments, testified in public hearings, and fought to expand protections for our environment.

An extreme justice, like Judge Gorsuch, could undermine the ability of grassroots activists to have a say, undoing everything we’ve worked so hard to protect.