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Posted at 1:24 PM ET, 12/23/2010

Senate approves two D.C. judicial nominees

By Ben Pershing

The Senate on Wednesday approved two of President Obama's four pending nominees to the bench of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, part of a last-minute flurry of action on nominations before the 111th Congress adjourned.

By voice vote, the Senate approved Robert L. Wilkins and Beryl Howell to serve as District Court judges. Wilkins is a partner at the law firm Venable, while Howell is on the U.S. Sentencing Commission.

Wilkins and Howell were both approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee in September and had been awaiting floor votes for three months. But two District Court nominees who were advanced by the committee in early December -- D.C. Superior Court Judge James E. Boasberg and Amy Berman Jackson, a lawyer at the firm Trout Cacheris -- were less fortunate.

Because Congress adjourned without voting on Boasberg or Jackson, Obama will have to resubmit their nominations in the 112th Congress. The same is true for Caitlin J. Halligan, the current general counsel in the office of the Manhattan District Attorney whom Obama nominated to serve as a U.S. appeals court judge for the District of Columbia Circuit. Halligan did not get a hearing before the Judiciary Committee.

By Ben Pershing | December 23, 2010; 1:24 PM ET

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