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# The **BLT**: The Blog of LegalTimes

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LAW AND LOBBYING IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL

July 16, 2010

### Sources: Obama Administration Vetting N.Y. Lawyer for D.C. Circuit

Caitlin Halligan, a top lawyer in the Manhattan district attorney's office, may be headed to a seat on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit.

Two lawyers said that agents with the Federal Bureau of Investigation had interviewed them about Halligan, a sign that she is under serious consideration by White House and U.S. Justice Department officials. They said they believe Halligan is under consideration for a judgeship on the D.C. Circuit.

An FBI review is standard for federal judicial nominees, though a nomination might not follow until months later.

If chosen for the D.C. Circuit, Halligan would be President Barack Obama's first nominee for the high-profile Washington appellate court, which has jurisdiction over many cases involving federal agencies and all cases arising from the military prison at Guantanamo Bay. The court is also a stepping stone to the U.S. Supreme Court, with four current justices among its alumni.

A White House spokesman did not immediately respond to a request for comment. A spokeswoman for Halligan's office said Halligan would have no comment.

Halligan, 43, has been general counsel to the Manhattan district attorney's office since January. She was previously the head of the appellate practice at Weil, Gotshal & Manges, and, under then-Attorney General Eliot Spitzer, she was solicitor general of the state of New York. Earlier, she served as a clerk to D.C. Circuit Judge Patricia Wald and to Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer, and as an associate at what was then Wiley, Rein & Fielding in Washington.

She has argued four cases before the Supreme Court and has authored numerous amicus briefs in other cases.

There are two vacancies on the D.C. Circuit: one created when John Roberts Jr. was confirmed as chief justice in 2005, and one when A. Raymond Randolph took senior status in 2008. In May, National Review Online mentioned Halligan as a potential nominee.

Posted by David Ingram on July 16, 2010 at 01:20 PM in [Other Courts](#), [Politics and Government](#), [Supreme Court](#) | [Permalink](#)  
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43 in my opinion is far too young for a lifetime appointment to the DC Circuit as there are many other qualified candidates who have put in the years of legal experience, but are not being considered. At the request of the Federalist Society, G.B. appointed a 40 year old (Elrod) to the 5th Circuit in 2007, which was a slap in the face to the legal community in Texas. She had no appellate experience whatsoever. This has to stop.

Posted by: Karen | [August 31, 2010 at 11:59 PM](#)

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