

The Fresno Bee

Two local attorneys on Feinstein federal judicial committee

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Sen. Dianne Feinstein has named two high-profile Fresno attorneys to a bipartisan committee that will recommend federal judges, United States attorneys and U.S. Marshals for appointment in California.

Lowell Carruth, a partner with McCormick, Barstow, Sheppard, Wayte & Carruth, and William Hahey, a former federal prosecutor, are the two local representatives on the five-member committee.

Both are Republicans, and Carruth in particular has been extremely influential at times in the appointment of local state Superior Court judges.

Sen. Barbara Boxer hasn't yet, but will soon appoint a similar committee to recommend the same positions.

The two senators, both Democrats, will take the suggestions from their respective advisory committees and then make recommendations to President Barack Obama, who will make nominations.

Obama doesn't have to follow the recommendations. Whomever he does nominate must then be confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

This isn't a competition between Boxer and Feinstein. The two will alternate in giving their recommendations to Obama. For instance, Obama will almost certainly appoint new U.S. Attorneys in each of the state's four federal judicial districts. That means Feinstein would recommend two of the positions, and Boxer the other two.

The set-up is similar to one in place during Bill Clinton's time as president.