

Puryear's judicial bid takes another hit

Articles have Washington insiders saying Corrections Corp. general counsel should keep his day job

By Ken Whitehouse

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A series of articles by the *New York Times* have Washington, D.C. insiders saying that Gus Puryear should keep his day job.

Puryear, executive vice president and general counsel for Nashville based Corrections Corporation of America, was nominated by President George W. Bush last year to serve on the U.S. District Court for Middle Tennessee.

Since the nomination, Puryear has been attacked here and in Washington for everything from his handling of CCA legal matters, his membership in the Belle Meade Country Club, to his lack of experience outside of corporate law.



Gus Puryear

While the nomination of Puryear has not moved due to objections of U.S. Senators Ted Kennedy and Diane Feinstein, he still has had hope of being confirmed to the bench. Now, a number of *NashvillePost.com* sources are saying that hope is even in more jeopardy.

Democratic insiders in Washington contacted by *NashvillePost.com* say that what hope Puryear had was effectively killed by a series of articles published this week by the *New York Times*. Republican insiders acknowledge that the articles have made Puryear's bid "more complicated" and there is no momentum to push him forward at this time.

While the articles don't mention Puryear by name, CCA is sharply criticized for their handling of the death of Boubacar Bah and the labeling of his inmate file as "proprietary information - not for distribution." Bah was 52-year-old tailor from Guinea who had overstayed a tourist visa.

While incarcerated, Bah had fallen and hit his head and became incoherent. According to the *NYT*, "documents detail how he was treated by guards and government employees: shackled and pinned to the floor of the medical unit as he moaned and vomited, then left in a disciplinary cell for more than 13 hours, despite repeated notations that he was unresponsive and intermittently foaming at the mouth."

He was eventually transported to a hospital, but his family was not notified of his whereabouts for five days. He died four months later.

The *Times* also ran an editorial on this matter yesterday.

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