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3-Minute Hearing Frees Prisoner in Death Case

C. Gerald Fisher

Justice search leaders

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WASHINGTON — Speculation on replacements for resigned justice William Brennan have centered on conservatives.

■ Solicitor General Kenneth W. Starr, the government's top courtroom lawyer, has been mentioned as a leading possibility for a high court vacancy. Starr gave up a federal judgeship to take the Justice Department job.

Many of the candidates come from the ranks of the Federal Appeals courts around the nation.

■ David Souter, a former New Hampshire Supreme Court judge who now sits on the 1st Circuit Court of Appeals in Boston.

■ Federal Appeals Court Judge Ralph K. Winter of the 2d Circuit in New York.

■ Roger Miner, of Albany, N.Y., of the 2d Circuit.

■ J. Harvie Wilkinson III of Charlottesville, Va., the 4th Circuit sitting in Richmond, Va.

■ William W. Wilkens Jr. of Greenville, S.C., sitting on the 4th Circuit and chairman of the U.S. Sentencing Commission.

■ Patrick E. Higginbotham of Dallas, Tex., sitting on the 5th Circuit in New Orleans.

■ Edith H. Jones of the 5th Circuit.

■ Frank Easterbrook of Chicago, sitting on the 7th Circuit court in Chicago.

■ Richard Posner of Chicago, of the 7th Circuit.

■ Pasco Bowman of