

Obama makes recess appointments to labour board

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WASHINGTON, Jan 5 — US President Barack Obama used so-called recess appointments on Wednesday to fill three vacant seats on the National Labour Relations Board, sidestepping congressional Republicans who had obstructed his nominations for a second time in the same day.

Obama used his presidential power to install Sharon Block, Terence Flynn and Richard Griffin to the NLRB, following his decision to appoint Richard Cordray as the head of the country's new consumer financial watchdog earlier on Wednesday.

"We can't wait to act to strengthen the economy and restore security for our middle class and those trying to get in it, and that's why I am proud to appoint these fine individuals to get to work for the American people," Obama said in a statement.

The NLRB has been a target of Republican criticism who view it as favouring the labour movement, a key part of Obama's support base as he campaigns for re-election in November.

It was involved in a politically charged case last year with Boeing Co which Republicans used to slam Democrat Obama, and last month ruled to shorten the time frame for union elections which the labour movement welcomed.

"The American people deserve to have qualified public servants fighting for them every day - whether it is to enforce new consumer protections or uphold the rights of working Americans," Obama said. — Reuters

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