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Obama's Recess Appointments Include Pesticide-Pushing Trade Rep

— By [Kate Sheppard](#) (/authors/kate-sheppard) | Mon Apr. 5, 2010 5:34 AM PDT



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President Barack Obama's [15 recess appointments](#) (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/president-obama-announces-recess-appointments-key-administration-positions>) drew fire from the right last week, in particular the choice of labor lawyer Craig Becker to serve on the National Labor Relations Board. But one controversial pick flew under the radar: Obama's [pesticide-pushing nominee](#) (<http://motherjones.com/politics/2009/11/obamas-pesticide-pushing-nominee>) to serve as the country's chief agricultural negotiator.

Obama's appointment of Islam "Isi" Siddiqui, a senior executive at the industry's main trade association, CropLife America, to serve as the head agricultural negotiator for the office of the US Trade Representative provoked [fierce opposition](#) (<http://motherjones.com/mojo/2009/11/siddiqui-opponents-make-hay-washington>) from environmental, organic, and local agricultural groups. His opponents say that his close relationship with the pesticide industry should disqualify him from a role in which he will be responsible for negotiating international agreements governing the use of pesticides and genetically modified foods. [More than 110](#) (http://www.panna.org/files/Senate_Letter_Siddiqui_1Mar10_0.pdf) organizations, lead by the Pesticide Action Network and the National Family Farm Coalition, wrote to senators protesting his appointment.

Obama's frustration at Republican blocks on his nominees is understandable. But in this case, there was substantial opposition from more than just Republicans that merited better scrutiny before moving Siddiqui forward.

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Kate Sheppard covers energy and environmental politics in Mother Jones' Washington bureau. For more of her stories, [click here](#) (/authors/kate-sheppard). She Tweets [here](#) (http://twitter.com/kate_sheppard).

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Submitted by Nelson Muntz (not verified) on Mon Apr. 5, 2010 7:40 AM PDT.

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