

June 7, 2010

Senator Patrick Leahy
Senator Jeff Sessions
United States Senate
Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Leahy and Sessions:

We are writing in support of Solicitor General Elena Kagan's nomination to become an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court. While speaking as individuals and not on behalf of our schools, we write from the unique vantage point of deans at U.S. law schools. From that perspective we observed General Kagan's work and accomplishments at Harvard. Many of us also know her academic work well. And, in the interest of full disclosure, we should add that some of us are personal friends of the nominee.

Elena Kagan excels along all relevant dimensions desired in a Supreme Court Justice. Her knowledge of law and skills in legal analysis are first-rate. Her writings in constitutional and administrative law are highly respected and widely cited. She is an incisive and astute analyst of law, with a deep understanding of both doctrine and policy. In terms of intelligence and intellectual ability, she is superbly qualified to sit on the United States Supreme Court.

As Dean of the Harvard Law School, General Kagan demonstrated a number of other attributes that could be considered key to serving as an Associate Justice. She was a superb and successful dean, among other reasons, because of her willingness to listen to diverse viewpoints and give them all serious consideration. She revealed a strong and consistent aptitude for forging coalitions that achieved smart and sensible solutions, often in the face of seemingly insoluble conflict. She was, at the same time, able to make decisions and lead when and where decision-making and leadership were essential. This ability to hear opinions from strongly opposed sides and to find resolutions that all can accept, and that even those who disagree can respect, are exactly what we should want in a collegial body like the Court. Elena Kagan has, over the course of her career, consistently exhibited patience, a willingness to listen, and an ability to lead, alongside enormous intelligence. The same qualities that enabled her to unify what some described as a fractious campus will serve the nation, and the Constitution, well.

Finally, Elena Kagan is known to us as a person of unimpeachable integrity. She will inspire those around her to pursue law and justice in a way that makes us proud.

Sincerely yours,



Larry D. Kramer
Dean and Richard E. Lang Professor of Law
Stanford Law School

On behalf of the following Law School Deans

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