

July 13, 2021

Senator Dick Durbin  
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Chuck Grassley  
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

We are former federal prosecutors and alumni of the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia. We are pleased to offer our support for the nomination of Jia M. Cobb to be a judge on the United States District Court for the District of Columbia.

Ms. Cobb possesses many qualities that we believe make her eminently qualified for this position. Her professional background has amply prepared her to be a federal judge. Ms. Cobb graduated with honors from Harvard Law School, where she was a Coordinating Editor for the Harvard Law Review, then clerked for the Honorable Diane Wood of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. Ms. Cobb moved to the District of Columbia in 2006, and since then, she has established a reputation within our community as a top-notch trial lawyer in both the criminal and civil contexts. She worked for six years at the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, representing hundreds of indigent clients in a wide array of criminal matters. In 2012, Ms. Cobb transitioned to a role at Relman Colfax, PLLC, a boutique plaintiffs'-side civil rights law firm. During her time at Relman, she has represented multiple law enforcement officers in race discrimination and other civil rights cases.

As a public defender and as a civil rights law firm partner, Ms. Cobb has tried dozens of cases to verdict and has shepherded countless more to resolution. She has been exposed to a wide range of criminal and civil litigation, and we are confident that her professional experiences will allow her to make a seamless transition from litigator to judge.

Ms. Cobb also would bring much-needed diversity to the federal bench. Among its active judges, the D.C. District Court now has only two African American judges; and there are in fact only 39 African American women federal judges in the entire country. Remarkably, Ms. Cobb is a third-generation African American attorney. In the summer of 1930—decades before the civil rights movement—her paternal grandfather graduated from the University of Chicago Law School as one of the only African American students in his class. Her father also is a lawyer, and she has been inspired to follow in their footsteps.

Finally, while we remain grateful that prosecutors are represented on the federal bench and are confident that their experiences amply prepare them to preside fairly, we also recognize the import of the experiences of lawyers like Ms. Cobb. In particular, the perspectives of public

defenders and civil rights lawyers have been historically under-represented in our courts; Ms. Cobb would bring both. On the D.C. District Court, of the 13 active judges, seven have experience as former Assistant U.S. Attorneys, and four more served as government lawyers at the Department of Justice. Only two have experience as public defenders. Ms. Cobb has spent her entire career representing people at their most vulnerable; we know how important it is to have good lawyering on both sides of the courtroom, and we likewise know how valuable those perspectives will be as a presiding judge.

In sum, we stand in support of the Biden Administration's efforts to nominate diverse, well-qualified, and well-regarded lawyers like Ms. Cobb who also would bring professional diversity to our federal courts. We urge Ms. Cobb's swift consideration and confirmation.

Sincerely,

Lionel Andre	2001-2017
Roy L. Austin, Jr.	1995; 2002-2006; 2009
Ademuyiwa Bamiduro	2007-2016
Jeremy Barber	2006-2010
Nicole L. Battle	2015-2021
Mervin A. Bourne, Jr.	2008-2021
Cormac Connor	2007-2011
Terry Eaton	2008-2014
Bianca Forde	2015-2020
Precious M. Gittens	2002-2007
Vanessa Goodwin	2014-2017
Angela Hart-Edwards	2002-2009
Jamila Hodge	2006-2018
June M. Jeffries	1983-2008
Akhi Johnson	2013-2019
Joshua Klein	2008-2011
James Marvin Perez	2009-2016
Priya Naik	2015-2020
Ari Redbord	2007-2019
Mona Sahaf	2008-2014
Anthony Saler	2008-2020
Jelahn Stewart	1999-2018