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February 17, 2011

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Hon. Patrick J. Leahy
Chairman, D-Vermont
United States Senate
Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Hon. Chuck Grassley
Ranking Member, R-Iowa
United States Senate
Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Appointment of Ramona V. Manglona -- Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Dear Senators Leahy and Grassley:

This letter is in support of the appointment of Ramona V. Manglona to the position of District Court judge for the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands.

I have practiced law in the CNMI since December 1988, first with the Office of U.S. Attorney and then in private practice since 1992. Prior to that, I served as an AUSA in Roanoke, Virginia for over five years and prior to that, five years with the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice. I have appeared before many judges in over 35 years of practice. CNMI Superior Court Judge Manglona is one of the better ones.

Judge Manglona is bright and studious and she writes her decisions in a logical, understandable manner. One day, you or your successors will consider her for the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Through a soft and professional demeanor in the court room, she commands respect from lawyers and laypersons. Her courtroom bears a strong imprint of justice and fairness. I have no qualms about her hearing any of my cases. I have won and I have lost before her, and I always felt that my client's position received fair and intelligent consideration.

I have heard from some in the community, mostly statesiders, that the Commonwealth needs an outsider to be a federal judge in order to insulate the court from the vagaries of local politics and families. Nonsense. Practically all state and federal judges at the trial court level in the United States are products of their local environment. The same goes for jurors who weigh life and death. Being local with knowledge of the community is considered positive, not negative. If conflicts arise under the law, the court and the litigants know how to handle the issue. I would trust Judge Manglona to give dignity and justice to all the individuals from this community that appeared before her, no matter

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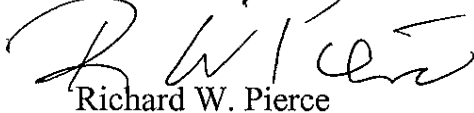
their race or heritage or politics. She is not petty, and she is not isolated from the world beyond these tiny islands.

Both she and her husband John, who is a justice on the CNMI's Supreme Court, have stout character, moral uprightness and reputations for honesty and forthrightness. I partnered with John for a few years when I began private practice, and I have the greatest respect for him. They have strong, supportive families and a good crop of children.

The Commonwealth needs a federal judge with roots in this community. Judge Manglona is the best choice, but she would be given high marks in any location, not just the CNMI. The CNMI is just the lucky recipient of her fine demeanor, character and mind.

I thank you for your time.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "RWPierce", written over the typed name.

Richard W. Pierce

cc allen_stayman@energy.senate.gov