

**Responses of Stephanie Thacker
Nominee to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fourth Circuit
to the Written Questions of Senator Amy Klobuchar**

- 1. If you had to describe it, how would you characterize your judicial philosophy?
How do you see the role of the judge in our constitutional system?**

Response: My judicial philosophy would be characterized first and foremost by impartiality and respect for the law and binding legal precedent. My judicial philosophy would also include a respect for all parties that appear before the Court. A judge's role in our constitutional system is as a neutral arbiter of the law.

- 2. What assurances can you give that litigants coming into your courtroom will be treated fairly regardless of their political beliefs or whether they are rich or poor, defendant or plaintiff?**

Response: Judicial fairness and impartiality are paramount in our legal system. I have a deep and abiding respect for the legal process and the importance of judicial impartiality. My legal career thus far has afforded me the opportunity to see all sides of the courtroom; civil and criminal, prosecution and defense, trial and appeal. In particular, my role as a prosecutor was also one in which impartiality and a fair assessment of the evidence was critical. I feel confident that those with whom I have worked during the course of my career—whether colleagues or opposing counsel, criminal defendants, or other parties against whom I have been engaged in litigation, or judges before whom I have appeared—would assess me as fair, professional and above-board.

- 3. In your opinion, how strongly should judges bind themselves to the doctrine of stare decisis? How does the commitment to stare decisis vary depending on the court?**

Response: The doctrine of stare decisis is a bedrock principle and one to which I would strongly adhere if confirmed. I would follow binding precedent of the United States Supreme Court and of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals.