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Congress of the United States
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January 6, 2012

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
Chairman
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy:

I am writing to offer my strongest support for President Obama's nomination of Judge John Fowlkes to serve as District Court Judge for the Western District of Tennessee. He has already distinguished himself as a judge of the Shelby County Criminal Court and his elevation to the federal bench is well deserved.

As "Vermont's other Congressman" I appreciate the strong working relationship we have developed. I particularly appreciated your help in passing our legislation, the SPEECH Act, and my legislation, the National Guard and Reservist Debt Relief Extension Act, through the Senate. I would appreciate your continuing help as Judge Fowlkes's nomination is considered by the Senate.

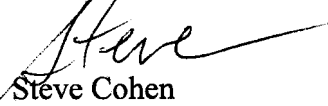
Judge Fowlkes is a superb lawyer and judge and has a sterling reputation in Memphis. Before recommending him to President Obama, I invited advice from a cross section of respected members of the legal community including the Memphis Bar Association, the Ben Jones Chapter of the National Bar Association, the Trial Lawyers Association, the Women's Bar Association, and others. Everyone consulted had the highest praise for Judge Fowlkes's legal acumen, unquestionable integrity and work ethic. There was not a dissenting voice in the Memphis community – Democrat or Republican – and I see no reason why his nomination should not cruise through the Senate.

I recognize that the Senate Judiciary Committee has a particularly busy agenda this year and that the judicial nomination process has enjoyed little bipartisan cooperation in this Congress. However, I respectfully request that you do all you can to ensure a smooth confirmation process for Judge Fowlkes. I have spoken personally with Senators Alexander and Corker and they have assured me that they both support his nomination.

If I can do anything to help as you consider Judge Fowlkes's nomination, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your leadership on this and so many issues.

As always, I remain,

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve", written in a cursive style.

Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "TN 9 & Vermont 2", written in a cursive style.