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June 8, 2018

The Honorable Charles Grassley
Chairman, Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member, Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Feinstein:

We write to express our support for Ryan Nelson's nomination for a position on the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. We know Ryan through his deep connections to Brigham Young University, where he studied both as an undergraduate and as a law student. Indeed, we both taught Ryan when he was a law student and have watched his career progress. We believe Ryan will serve the United States with honor and distinction.

Whenever anyone visits BYU, they see these words: "Enter to Learn; Go Forth to Serve." This is not by accident. As educators, our goal is to teach our students to appreciate and exemplify both of those admonitions. In our experience, Ryan does so.

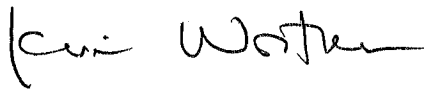
First, Ryan came to BYU with a love of learning that he retains to this day. Both as an undergraduate and as a law student, Ryan earned full-tuition scholarships. And especially relevant to the position to which he has been nominated, as a law student, he served as Lead Articles Editor on the *BYU Law Review*, graduated *magna cum laude*, and excelled in moot court at oral argument and brief writing. Because of his many academic accomplishments, he was hired as a law clerk on the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. Afterwards, he spent another year clerking, this time for the Iran-U.S. Claims Tribunal at The Hague. After working at a major firm, he has served as Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Deputy General Counsel of the Office of Management and Budget, and as Special Counsel to a United States Senator—in other words, he has worked at high levels in all three branches of government. Since returning to Idaho, moreover, he has been a general counsel of a private company, further expanding his legal skills. Ryan's success in so many different types of positions confirms that he is intellectually curious. By any measure, he loves to learn.

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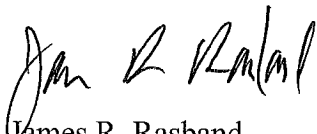
Second, and to us, more important, Ryan also is dedicated to service. As an undergraduate, Ryan took a leave of absence for two years to volunteer as a missionary for his faith in Belgium. As a law student, he served as a “bishop’s counselor”—akin to an assistant pastor—in his congregation, providing several hours of service to others each week while carrying a full and demanding law school schedule. He received no compensation for any of this service. And after graduation, he has devoted numerous hours to pro bono causes. For instance, we understand that he spent hundreds of hours representing a young man who was convicted of murdering a police officer in Washington, D.C. This sort of work is not glamorous, but it is essential to a fair system of justice. Ryan’s dedication to service does not surprise us; that is who Ryan is.

In short, Ryan is more than just a talented attorney; he also values learning and service. In all of our interactions with him, moreover, he has been collegial, kind, fair-minded, and thoughtful. We are confident that he will continue to exhibit these qualities as he serves our nation as a federal judge. We respectfully urge the Senate to approve his nomination.

Sincerely,



Kevin J. Worthen
President, Brigham Young University
Hugh W. Colton Professor of Law
Former Dean, J. Reuben Clark Law School,
Brigham Young University



James R. Rasband
Academic Vice President, Brigham Young University
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