

The Court of Appeals
of the
State of Washington

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April 15, 2024

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
211 Russell Senate Office
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Rebecca Pennell, Federal District Court for the Eastern
District of Washington

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee Members,

I am very pleased to write this letter in support of Judge Rebecca Pennell's nomination to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Washington. I have had the pleasure of serving on the Washington State Court of Appeals with her since my appointment in 2018. She has served the court in leadership positions and on committees, and has been an active volunteer in the community as well.

I first met Judge Pennell when she attended Judicial College shortly after her appointment. I taught Advanced Family Law, and though Judge Pennell came from a criminal background, she was very engaged in the session and already had a good understanding of family law after her brief time on the court.

I next met her when I was appointed to Division One of the Washington State Court of Appeals and attended our state-wide appellate conference. Judge Pennell was very involved in our discussions regarding not only the law, but how to ensure justice was served and that our opinions were clear for those who read them. She takes very seriously the fact that most of the cases that come through the Court of Appeals end with our court.

Judge Pennell and I worked very closely together on a project with the Federal Bar Association of the Western District of Washington in 2021. It was a Continuing Legal Education presentation entitled, The POWER Act CLE: EmPOWER Advocates and Survivors. Judge Pennell was instrumental in

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securing many of the speakers and worked extremely hard to make the CLE the success that it was.

Even though Judge Pennell is in Division Three, I have had the opportunity to serve on a panel with her when she was a visiting judge in our division. She was extremely well prepared, had a wonderful understanding of the issues and the law, asked pointed questions during oral argument, and was very pleasant to confer with regarding the resolutions to the cases. Judge Pennell was efficient in getting her opinions written and reviewing the other panel members' opinions for her signature. It was a great experience.

Judge Pennell does not hesitate to volunteer when help is needed in the court or in the community. She has a deep commitment to access to justice, the rule of law, and the quality of the judiciary. Judge Pennell has all the qualities one could want in a judicial officer. I am happy to wholeheartedly support her confirmation.

Sincerely,



Lori K. Smith

Chief Judge, Division One

Washington State Court of Appeals