

Dear Senators:

I have been practicing law in Memphis and West Tennessee for the past 40 years. I have served on the Criminal Justice Act panel and have practiced federal criminal defense law here since the early 1990's. I have worked with Assistant United States Attorneys under the supervision at least 10 U.S. Attorney's and acting U.S. Attorneys during my years in practice. I consider my personal politics to be conservative and I am a reliable Republican voter.

I consider Kevin Ritz to be the most apolitical U.S. Attorney I have known. We tried cases against each other when he was an Assistant United States Attorney and he always conducted himself with honor, truthfulness and dignity. In all that time, I never knew his politics. I guess he is a Democrat because the President who nominated him is a Democrat. But I never would have figured it out on my own.

I recall the incident that the senators questioned him about at his hearing. At the time it occurred, I was approached by the lawyer who complained of Mr. Ritz's conduct. She knew that I had been on the panel for a while and wanted to know my thoughts about it. I considered her to be a friend then and I still consider her to be a friend. I never heard Mr. Ritz's side at the time. My perception at the time was that the controversy was the result of some miscommunication between Mr. Ritz and a young lawyer who was new to the CJA panel, new to federal criminal defense and whose panel work was a small part of her overall practice. I never got the impression that Mr. Ritz had purposefully misled her. That is still my perception.

I whole-heartedly endorse Mr. Ritz for a seat on the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Sincerely,

LAW OFFICE OF STEPHEN R. LEFFLER, P.C.

By: \_\_\_\_\_ Stephen R. Leffler \_\_\_\_\_