

July 12, 2024

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

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

RE: Jonathan E. Hawley, nominee for United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee members,

I am writing in my personal capacity to endorse the nomination of Judge Jonathan E. Hawley to serve as a judge for the United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois. This is not a mere reference letter, but a factual account based on my professional interactions with Judge Hawley.

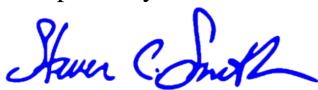
As a Task Force Officer with Homeland Security Investigations, I have presented numerous search warrants and criminal complaints to Judge Hawley for review. While he approved most of these documents, he did not approve all of them, demonstrating his commitment to upholding legal standards. Judge Hawley's thorough approach and high standards have consistently challenged me to improve as an investigator, reinforcing the importance of meticulous preparation and adherence to proper procedures.

Judge Hawley's fairness is particularly evident in detention hearings. While he has detained most of the individuals I've arrested, he hasn't detained all of them, demonstrating his careful consideration of each case. His actions reflect a balance between public safety concerns and individual rights. Among the many judges I've interacted with, Judge Hawley stands out for his exceptional impartiality, extensive legal knowledge, and ability to maintain high standards while treating all parties with respect.

Having served as a police officer since 2003 (in South Carolina and Illinois), I have interacted with many judges and presented legal processes before various courts. Judge Hawley stands out for his exceptional fairness and impartiality. His balanced approach ensures careful consideration of law enforcement objectives and individual rights. Judge Hawley's judicial temperament, extensive legal knowledge, and ability to maintain high standards while treating all parties with respect make him an excellent candidate for this position.

Based on my professional interactions, Judge Hawley would be an asset to the United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois. His fairness, thoroughness, and commitment to upholding the law make him well-suited for this role. I would happily discuss this matter further if you require additional information. I appreciate your consideration.

Respectfully,



Steven C. Smith  
233 S. Kansas Ave.  
Morton, IL 61550  
(309) 291-1108