

JONES DAY

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December 11, 2025

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Chair
Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Brian C. Lea

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee of the United States Senate:

We are partners in the law firm Jones Day. I am pleased to deliver this letter expressing our enthusiastic support for the confirmation by the United States Senate of our former partner, Brian Lea, to the United States District Court for the Western District of Tennessee. We hold a broad range of policy and jurisprudential views, but we are united in our view, based on years of working with Brian, that he is eminently qualified to serve as a United States district judge.

As of this writing, Jones Day has approximately 2,500 lawyers in 40 offices across five continents. It ranks among the largest and most accomplished law firms in the world. Jones Day began its existence as a partnership in Ohio more than 130 years ago. We are proud of the contributions our colleagues have made in the service of this nation during that time. Many of our current and former lawyers have served the United States in various capacities, and a number of them are counted among the country's most esteemed jurists. Justice Antonin Scalia was an associate at Jones Day in Cleveland. Former lawyers Tim Dyk, Jeffrey Sutton, Gregory Katsas, Michael Scudder, John Nalbandian, Chad Readler, Eric Murphy, Peter Phipps, Rachel Bloomekatz, and (as of a few weeks ago) Eric Tung all serve today as judges of United States Courts of Appeals, and former lawyers Rudolph Contreras, Benita Pearson, Doug Cole, J.P. Boulee, John Sinatra, Kat Mizelle, Robert Huie, Lindsay Jenkins, and Sparkle Sooknanan serve as judges of United States District Courts.

Brian is very much of the same character as his colleagues who went before him onto the federal bench. He is an exceptionally intelligent and principled lawyer possessed of unwavering integrity, outstanding discernment, and a total commitment to the rule of law. He is a legal thinker of the first order, who has earned the respect and admiration of countless colleagues along the way. He began his journey as a lawyer at the University of Georgia Law School, from which he graduated first in his class in 2009. From there he went on to clerk, first for Judge Ed Carnes of the Eleventh Circuit and then for Justice Clarence Thomas of the United States Supreme Court.

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Brian came to Jones Day in 2012 from his clerkship with Justice Thomas. With the exception of a two-year stint as a visiting professor at the University of Georgia School of Law (2015–2017), he was with us until he left in January of this year to join the United States Department of Justice as a Deputy Associate Attorney General.

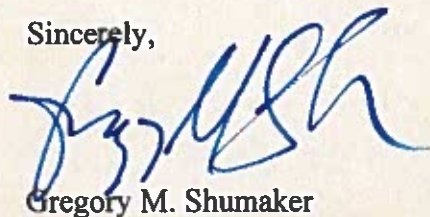
At Jones Day, Brian was a member of the Issues & Appeals Practice, first as an associate and, from 2020, as a partner. In a practice full of formidably talented lawyers, Brian stood out for the rigor of his thought and the meticulousness of his craft. He was known for his airtight arguments, which became, through painstaking rounds of drafting and editing, polished gems of clear, elegant and, above all, persuasive prose. Clients particularly appreciated the power of Brian's lawyering and entrusted him with important briefs and arguments.

As a colleague, Brian was known as someone who could appreciate all sides of an argument and make people feel heard. He formed strong relationships with lawyers across the Firm. The same pedagogical urges that led Brian to spend two years at the University of Georgia (where he taught a course with Justice Thomas) served him well at Jones Day, where he was a mentor to many.

Brian's work at Jones Day has left him well equipped to take the bench as a trial judge. The group in which he served is called the *Issues & Appeals Practice*, not the Appeals Practice. Lawyers in that practice—and this is certainly true of Brian—work extensively in trial courts, at tasks ranging from the drafting of complaints and dispositive motions, to the handling of discovery disputes, charge conferences, and post-trial motions. Brian has extensive experience in all of those phases of trial. And he has scholarly interests, including particular expertise in the conflict of laws, that will enable him to be a productive member of the judiciary from day one.

In short, the qualities that Brian exhibited throughout his career at Jones Day, and that earned him so many friends and admirers among his colleagues and clients, make us confident that Brian will serve the United States well as a district court judge. We do not doubt that should the Senate confirm him, Brian will quickly establish himself as one of the country's preeminent judges, known as much for his fair-mindedness as for his first-rate intellect. We respectfully urge you to advance Brian's nomination to the full Senate and then to confirm him to the bench.

Sincerely,



Gregory M. Shumaker

cc: Attachment

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Attachment
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John Allan
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Patrick Baldwin
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Brett Barragate
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Erin Burke
Jason Burnette
Edward Carter
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Louis Chaiten
Tyrone Childress
Dickson Chin
Theodore Chung
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Kristen McDonald
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Daniel Merrett
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Caroline Mitchell

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Yeah Sil Moon
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