May 14, 2024

<u>BY EMAIL</u>

Chairman Richard Joseph Durbin
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

Re: Confirmation of Julia M. Lipez to the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Graham:

The Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MECASA) represents the seven local sexual assault support centers across Maine. These centers provide direct sexual assault support services for survivors of sexual violence and those closest to them, including running a 24/7 helpline, support groups, and supporting survivors accessing the court system in a variety of ways. Sexual assault advocates in Maine support survivors in many types of court proceedings in the criminal justice system and the civil justice system, including claims based on child sexual abuse, sexual harassment in the workplace, and sexual assault on campus.

Our local directors have voted to support Justice Lipez's appointment for a variety of reasons. First, Justice Lipez has experience working with survivors of some of the most challenging sexual violence cases—survivors of commercial sexual exploitation or trafficking. Through this work, she has been thoughtful and victim centered. In addition, Justice Lipez has always been collaborative and trauma informed in her work as a prosecutor, including participating in statewide groups and engaging in trainings for other members of the bar about trauma informed representation. Finally, our experience of working with her in this variety of contexts has confirmed that she has the highest degree of integrity and ethics.

For these reasons, MECASA and the local sexual assault centers across Maine offer our support for Justice Lipez's confirmation.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Ward Saxl
Executive Director, Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault

cc: Senator Susan M. Collins
   Senator Angus S. King, Jr.