

September 23, 2026

United States Senate, Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Grassley, Ranking Member Durbin, and Members of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary:

First Liberty Institute is the nation's largest legal organization dedicated solely to defending religious liberty for all Americans. On behalf of First Liberty, I write in support of Jesus Osete's confirmation as a United States District Court Judge for the Western District of Missouri.

Mr. Osete's career reflects a dedicated public servant who is committed to the Constitution and the rule of law. After state and federal judicial clerkships, Mr. Osete served the State of Missouri in various capacities during which he had the rare opportunity to argue a case before the United States Supreme Court.

Since 2025 he has served in the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division, first as a Deputy Assistant Attorney General and now as Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General. During his tenure at the Department of Justice, Mr. Osete's record reflects his participation and leadership across a wide range of important legal issues that affect Americans every day. These numerous and diverse experiences have culminated in a well-rounded practitioner and serve as excellent preparation for a United States district court.

Mr. Osete has described the role of a judge as the unbiased application of the Constitution and the laws enacted by the legislature. That is the historical standard that senators have and must continue to seek in district judges. We are confident Mr. Osete will uphold that high standard.

Although judges may be required to decide contentious issues, religious liberty is one of the few subjects on which the Supreme Court has repeatedly spoken with one voice. It is in this regard that Mr. Osete's work at the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division is especially noteworthy. His record reflects one who advocates for religious liberty for all Americans,



even those of minority faith groups. A judge who takes these protections seriously, applying them evenhandedly and without regard to the faith at issue, serves the constitutional promise that no American is made a second-class citizen because of what he or she believes.

For these reasons, we are confident Jesus Osete has the training, the record, and the disposition to be a fair and careful district judge. We respectfully urge his confirmation.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and for your continued service to our country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kelly Shackelford". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a thin vertical line.

Kelly J. Shackelford
President, CEO & Chief Counsel
First Liberty Institute