

May 12, 2023

Senator Richard Durbin  
Chairman  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Lindsey Graham  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Letter of Support for the Confirmation of the Honorable Ana de Alba, Nominee for the  
United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit Court.

Dear Chairman Durbin, Ranking Member Lindsey Graham and Committee Members:

Respectfully and with sincere enthusiasm, I offer my support and recommendation for the Honorable Ana de Alba to be appointed to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit Court.

By way of brief introduction, I am a retired United States Magistrate Judge (23 years) with the Fresno Division of the Eastern District of California, Ninth Circuit. Prior to that, I served as both a California Superior Court Judge as well as a California Municipal Court Judge in Fresno, CA. While on the Superior Court, I was the only female judge. When becoming a Magistrate Judge, I was the first full-time female judge in the Eastern District of the Ninth Circuit. Before taking the Bench, I was a prosecutor with the DA's Office, then practiced civil law for 8 years. I am pleased to have been called a pioneer for women and a mentor, as Judge de Alba has. She is very much a trailblazer herself, a champion and mentor for women in the law. I am so very proud of Ana!

The curriculum vitae of Judge de Alba clearly speaks volumes about her passions, accomplishments, dedication and work ethic. Given that she has recently been through the vetting process with the Senate Judiciary Committee and having been appointed as a United States District Court Judge here in the Eastern District of California this past July, 2022, you have recent letters of recommendations as well as undoubtedly fresh notes and recollections from her hearing before the Committee. It is my intent to give you my perspective about Judge de Alba from 42 years of experience in the law in the San Joaquin Valley.

First meeting Judge de Alba approximately seven years ago while she was still practicing law, I was immediately impressed with not only her knowledge of the law but her focus and composure as well. When I heard she had been appointed to the Fresno County Superior Court by Governor Brown, I was just as pleased for the Court, where I once sat, as I was for Judge de Alba. She was adding a fresh set of experiences and attitudes that are critically needed in this area of the United States, considered to be the most productive agricultural region in the world. They cover the gamut of laborers' rights, farmer's water rights, land use, etc. Judge de Alba grew up in that world, actually working in the fields

with her entire family. She learned firsthand the effects this rugged life had on families, small and large businesses and economy, as is apparent in the data you already have in your files about her. It gave her strength, focus and tenacity. During her tenure with the Superior Court, she also taught Civil Rights Litigation at our local San Joaquin College of Law. Again, she lived the topic. Indeed, I heard high praise from her colleagues on the Superior Court bench as well as teachers at the Law School about the totality of her passion for service to the Court, the Law School, and the Community.

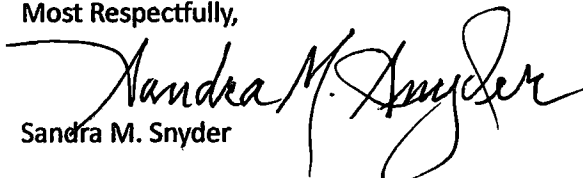
Our local newspaper, The Fresno Bee, starts a frontpage article, on April 16, 2023: "Nine months ago, U.S. District (sic) Court Judge Ana de Alba was hearing cases as a Fresno County Superior Court judge." As you of course know, she was nominated by President Biden on January 19, 2022, confirmed by the Senate on June 21, 2022, received her commission on July 7, 2022, and sworn in at our Court on July 8, 2022. She is the first Latina to take the bench in the Eastern District, California, of the Ninth Circuit.

While being nominated by the President for a higher court appointment seemingly so soon after a previous appointment is not customary, Judge de Alba is uniquely qualified to accommodate and embrace the challenge. Throughout her life, she has had to adjust quickly to change. And academically, she is considered an excellent researcher and writer. She is collegial and will share responsibilities with her new fellow jurists. She makes friends easily. She is a team player. In the Ninth Circuit, and especially California, when judicial openings become available, it is critical to fill the vacancies as soon as possible. Even more critical is to fill those seats with outstandingly diverse and qualified applicants. Judge de Alba is just such a candidate. A farmworker's daughter, graduating from a top law school in the nation, University of California's Boalt Hall, then receiving numerous awards and being a member of many legally related organizations since becoming a lawyer and a judge is indicative of a pledge of duty and sincere devotion. [See Judge de Alba's resume.]

Finally, I submit that Ana de Alba has a peace about her that is beyond her 44 years of age. She listens well. She thinks before she speaks. I was informed that immediately after taking her oath for her District Court seat, she took the time and effort to introduce herself to as many staff members in the entire Court as she could. Judge de Alba embraces the fact that it takes "a village," an entire judicial and law enforcement network, to nurture the efficacy of American Justice. She is caring about all those who know her, who come before her, even those for whom she will follow the law and rule against.

Judge de Alba is qualified in all ways to be a Court of Appeals Judge. I wholeheartedly support the nomination of President Joseph Biden to elevate her thusly. She is a guardian of our system of justice and will be so for life. Judge de Alba is exceptional!

Most Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sandra M. Snyder". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "S" at the beginning.

Sandra M. Snyder

U.S. Magistrate Judge, Eastern District of California

Retired