

September 21, 2026

The Honorable Chuck Grassley, Chairman
The Honorable Dick Durbin, Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Grassley and Durbin,

We are former law clerks to Judge Lee Rudofsky. And we write to urge his speedy confirmation to the Eighth Circuit. Each of us has worked closely with Judge Rudofsky. In our view, he has all the right attributes to thrive as a circuit judge.

First, Judge Rudofsky has an unrivaled love for the law—one that is equally remarkable and contagious. He brings the same intensity and careful study to every case, whether he is dealing with a garden-variety pro se prisoner complaint, a state law contract dispute, or a novel constitutional issue. When he finally feels like he has found the right answer, he beams with genuine excitement and pride. And when a clerk completes work on a particularly good opinion, Judge Rudofsky half-jokingly plays and sings “the Egg” from the musical 1776. (“It’s a masterpiece I say; they will cheer every word, every letter.”) As clerks, seeing a judge work so diligently yet so happily has a natural motivating and modeling effect. In Judge Rudofsky’s chambers, we learned to take the law seriously and ourselves less so.

Second, Judge Rudofsky is genuinely open-minded. He does not want a specific outcome in any given case; he just wants to get the correct answer under the law. He not only welcomes, but actively seeks out, thoughtful disagreement from his clerks. On thorny issues, Judge Rudofsky often asks his clerks repeatedly—and over the course of several days or weeks—whether he is making the right decision. And if he thinks a clerk is just agreeing to avoid arguing about a case, Judge Rudofsky will take the other side and make the clerk argue Judge’s original position. All in all, Judge Rudofsky has successfully created and maintained an environment where his clerks feel that their contributions to his decision-making process are truly important. But, at the same time, it is clear to each of us that Judge Rudofsky always makes the ultimate decision himself.

Third, Judge Rudofsky invests an enormous amount of time and energy in his former, current, and future clerks. He takes a sincere and lifelong interest in our personal and professional development. He looks for and makes the most of every opportunity to discuss our career and life goals, and to help us find paths to professional and personal success. Judge Rudofsky always says that being a great lawyer requires being a good person. Although he expects us to do the job to

the best of our ability, Judge Rudofsky also insists that we explore our outside interests, take needed family time, and meet any religious obligations we have. He goes out of his way to honor and celebrate all of our differences, be they personal, political, cultural, religious, or philosophical.

Finally, Judge Rudofsky is just an all-around nice guy. He marries integrity, wisdom, compassion, and sound judgment. He elevates those around him, and he fosters a culture of mutual respect and professional excellence. We are confident both that he will continue to serve with distinction and that his future clerks will find the same man on the Eighth Circuit that we knew at the District Court.

Sincerely,



Phillip Treat



Gage Raley



Glenn Larkin



Mollie Riddle



Nicholas Bell



Jacob Paolillo



Corbin Robinson



Skylar Burton



Tim Dahms



Brad Grisenti



Steven LaRussa