

October 9, 2020

The Honorable A. Mitchell McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
290 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators:

It is a rare moment—once-in-a-lifetime, I suspect—to wave to a friend in the pick-up line at soccer practice and just days later see her gracefully descend the steps of the White House Rose Garden to accept her nomination to the nation’s highest court.

Of course, it wasn’t a *complete* surprise.

I have known the Barrett family for several years. I also knew that Amy was a top contender for the U.S. Supreme Court for the second time in three years. And my family and I watched anxiously, along with the rest of the nation, when the internet exploded with footage of the Barrett family leaving their home in their Sunday best, with a dignified Amy in the lead—and in the driver’s seat—departing for the White House.

But what an incredible moment to share with our children, three of whom have been classmates with Barrett children since kindergarten, their wide eyes riveted to the screen, listening to the steady and confident words of “Mrs. Barrett.” There were fist pumps, indeed. Especially when it was noted that Amy will be the first female Justice of the Supreme Court with school-aged children. Working moms, unite. She truly is one of us.

Like the Barretts, ours is a large, busy family, with two working parents balancing family life and careers. For as long as we’ve known them, Amy and Jesse have been an inspiring example and a touchstone for us, as we discerned our calling as parents while pursuing demanding professional vocations.

Here were two parents, much like us, hailing from different parts of the country, raising their own family in South Bend, Indiana after leaving successful jobs in big cities—D.C. for the Barretts, New York City for us—to return to our common alma mater, Notre Dame, to teach. In a small community full of big families and impressive academic pedigrees many of us are working hard

to balance the rigors of it all. But, if anyone can juggle it all *and all at the same time*—dual-careers, teaching, tenure, judging, drop-offs, and diapers—it’s Amy and Jesse, with genuine humility and grace—a true, modern Power Couple and an empowering example.

I first *met* Amy early in my career, when I was struggling with how to navigate academia as a mother. Amy was incredibly generous with her time and wisdom. Hers was a steady hand at my back then and later, during various pivotal periods of career and parenting discernment.

But I first came *to know* Amy as a mother, sitting on soccer sidelines together, through various children’s school and sports activities, negotiating carpools, attending elementary school musicals, and comparing whose kid has the better First Communion banner (answer: a Barrett kid, every time).

As a faculty member at Notre Dame, I am fortunate to work among many of the world’s brightest minds in their subjects. Many of my colleagues in the Law School are super-human, but as many have said: Amy stands apart. She is a giant in her field. But despite her incredible success, she is also a loving, devoted mother and friend.

At Amy’s investiture as a federal appellate judge in 2017, a mutual friend captured her so perfectly: when you are in a conversation with Amy Barrett, you are the only person in the room, the only person in the world she is focused on in that moment. In a world of skeptics and sycophants, Amy is genuine and without pretense. She’s one of those friends who will always answer your call, even when she’s on a rare vacation with her husband.

All the while, Amy and her “superb” (Amy’s word, but I agree) husband, Jesse, have raised seven extraordinary children. They look you in the eye during conversation. They are courteous, gracious, and incredibly generous siblings and friends. They have been raised like so many Americans: they do their chores, wear hand-me-downs, and offer help without asking; they are honest, grounded, happy, hard-working kids. Just like their mom.

So, it came as no surprise, really, to see Amy pull up in her minivan to pick up her sons from soccer on the same day she returned from two consecutive days of interviews at the White House. Of course, she could have asked someone else to pick them up – we are a supportive community; we carpool; they have teen-aged daughters who drive. But, amidst everything Amy does *and is*, she is focused first on others, including her children, as a devoted mother and friend, whom we’ve grown to respect, admire, and love.

And I have no doubt that you, too, are going to love her.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aimee Catrow Buccellato". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Aimee Catrow Buccellato