

April 26, 2021

United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin, Ranking Member Grassley, and Committee Members:

On behalf of the 180,000 advocates of National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), I write to express our strong support for the nomination of Candace Jackson-Akiwumi to the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. For over 20 years, NCJW has advocated for judicial nominees who are fair, independent, qualified, and reflect the communities they serve. Candace Jackson-Akiwumi meets all of our criteria.

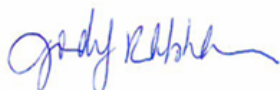
Jackson-Akiwumi is a highly qualified nominee who has spent the bulk of her career focused on the most vulnerable, from serving on a law school team that challenged a death row inmate's sentence to working as a public defender for ten years in Chicago. Indeed, while at the federal defender program in the Northern District of Illinois, Jackson-Akiwumi represented over 400 clients. During this time, she successfully argued that the US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms sting operations unfairly targeted racial minorities. Her favorable defense has allowed other defense attorneys to argue that certain cases should be thrown out in situations where the government has selectively prosecuted racial minorities.

In addition to public defense, Jackson-Akiwumi has a strong background in civil litigation, from litigating complex civil cases involving contracts, patents, securities, and tax disputes to investigations and criminal defense. Her cumulative experience in the public and private sector uniquely qualifies her to preside over a range of cases.

If confirmed, Jackson-Akiwumi would be the third appeals court judge to have spent the majority of her career as a public defender, the first-ever former federal defender on the Seventh Circuit, and the only Black woman on the Seventh Circuit — currently an all-white court. Candace Jackson-Akiwumi brings a critical perspective and a dedicated commitment to equal justice under the law, key attributes for a lifetime position on the federal court.

NCJW urges you to support the nomination of Candace Jackson-Akiwumi to the US Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit.

Sincerely,



Jody Rabhan
Chief Policy Officer
National Council of Jewish Women