

April 9, 2021

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck E. Grassley
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

Each of us has had the privilege of serving as a law clerk to Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson on the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. We write this letter to convey our enthusiastic and unequivocal support for her elevation to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. We are federal prosecutors, capital defense attorneys, agency lawyers and policymakers, attorneys at private law firms, in-house counsel, legal academics, and public interest lawyers. Although our backgrounds, personal views, and professional experiences are diverse, we speak with one voice in conveying our steadfast belief that Judge Jackson is a brilliant and conscientious judge whose nomination should be confirmed.

Judge Jackson's professional qualifications for a judgeship on the Court of Appeals are exemplary. Her background as a public defender, appellate litigator, federal sentencing commissioner, and trial judge has equipped her with the experience necessary to resolve the important and novel legal questions that come before the D.C. Circuit. Indeed, over the past eight years, Judge Jackson has handled numerous high-profile cases on the district court, demonstrating her ability to reason through some of the most complex and hotly debated legal questions of recent years. As an appellate judge, she would bring a deep awareness of and concern for the impact of her opinions on the parties, the lower courts, and the nation at large.

Judge Jackson's stellar resume and credentials are but one small part of what makes her an outstanding jurist. As her former law clerks, each of us can attest to her incredible intellect, her diligence, and her unwavering commitment to the rule of law. On the district court, Judge Jackson works tirelessly to approach each case, big or small, in the same way: balancing her intelligence with humility and curiosity, working to understand both the factual record and the applicable law backward and forward. During that

process, Judge Jackson listens carefully to the parties' contentions and her clerks' views, and never assumes the answer to a legal or factual question. And in her decisions, she conspicuously lays out every step of her reasoning, never shying away from grappling with previously unresolved or murky areas of the law when necessary to resolve a case.

Judge Jackson's extraordinary work ethic is driven in large part by her dedication to public service. She is keenly aware that judges serve the public, and because of that, she strives to ensure that the parties and the public understand the law and the basis for her decisions in each case. Judge Jackson treats every person who appears before her with dignity and respect. She is careful to ensure that all parties understand and are able to invoke their rights at every phase of the proceedings, especially in criminal cases. And when writing opinions, she reads the final draft aloud to ensure that any person hearing her words will understand them. Judge Jackson believes that it is not enough for her rulings to be correct; they also must make sense.

On top of all of these qualities, Judge Jackson is one of the warmest and kindest people we have had the pleasure to know. Whether it has been a year or a day since you last saw her, she greets you with the same trademark broad smile, enthusiasm in her voice, and (before the COVID-19 pandemic) a warm hug. From the very beginning of her tenure on the bench, Judge Jackson has always looked out for her clerks, whether by helping us navigate our career paths, providing mentorship during the clerkship and beyond, or stocking her chambers with enough snacks to satisfy the appetites of an entire football team—and then some. She and her husband, Patrick, have welcomed us and our families with open arms, hosting clerks and court staff for dinners and holiday parties, and sending us all home with some famous Jackson family hot fudge.

Clerking for Judge Jackson was an honor and a privilege. Her combination of intellect, integrity, compassion, and experience would make her an outstanding judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. We unconditionally support her nomination and urge you to confirm her.

Respectfully submitted,

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