

March 9, 2022

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

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

Re: The nomination of Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to be an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

We have served as senior lawyers in the United States Department of Justice and are writing to urge the confirmation of United States Court of Appeals Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to be an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. Some of us have appeared before Judge Jackson in the District Court for the District of Columbia or the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. Others of us saw her work as a member the United States Sentencing Commission. Some of us know her from her three prestigious clerkships in the District Court, the Court of Appeals, and the Supreme Court. Others of us worked with her in private practice or saw her work when she was a Public Defender. Still others of us know her personally. We are well-qualified to speak to her many qualifications to serve as an Associate Justice.

Judge Jackson's academic credentials are extraordinary, with degrees with honors from both Harvard College and Harvard Law School. The strength of that record led to her selection as a clerk by renowned District Court Judge Patti Saris, who has served with distinction as both a district court judge and as Chief Judge of the District of Massachusetts for many years. There followed a clerkship with Judge Bruce Selya, who had been appointed by President Reagan to the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit. And from there, she went on to serve as a law clerk to Justice Stephen Breyer, whose shoes she would fill should she be confirmed. Judge Jackson would emulate Justice Breyer in his principled pragmatism.

Judge Jackson is well-steeped in the law, from her tenure on the bench and from her work prior to that tenure. She would bring to the Court a deep understanding of how our criminal justice system works. She was not only a member of the Sentencing Commission—as was Justice Breyer before her—but she was a dedicated Public Defender. We prosecutors can tell you how important it is to have skilled lawyers serving as Public Defenders—and Judge Jackson was among the most skilled and the most dedicated. She has been even-handed in her treatment of the defense and prosecution alike when she has ruled in criminal cases. Her appreciation for how the criminal justice system works would be a critical addition to the Court.

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Judge Jackson brought her skills and dedication to her work in private practice as well. She has seen our system of justice from many important angles. Those of us who know her personally see her as enormously collaborative and collegial, as could be seen in the bipartisan agreements she forged on the Sentencing Commission.

Judge Jackson's commitment to public service comes from her family, whose members worked in public education, public safety, and our military. She understands the importance of diverse views and diverse experiences informing our courts and judicial decision-making. She is a mother, a wife, a lawyer, a public servant, a judge.

We applaud the President's decision to nominate Judge Jackson and we urge the Senate to confirm her. The country will benefit from her service on the Supreme Court.

Sincerely,

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Attorney General of the United States,
2015 – 2017; U.S. Attorney, E. District of New
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