

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

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

Re: *Arianna J. Freeman, Esquire*
Nominee to the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit

Dear Senators Durbin and Grassley:

I write in support of the confirmation of Arianna Freeman to the Third Circuit Court of Appeals. Let me begin by saying that my views are mine alone, and not those of Temple University. Second, let me acknowledge that I do not know Ms. Freeman personally. Nevertheless, I feel passionately that she represents the sort of individual who should be a member of the United States Circuit Court.

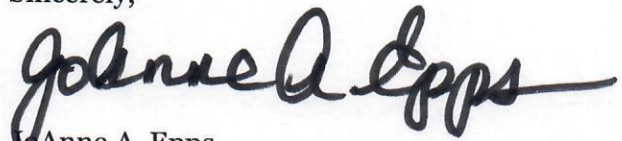
A Swarthmore and Yale Law School graduate, Ms. Freeman has had an extremely successful career as a federal court litigator in both the district court and the Third Circuit, currently serving as a Managing Attorney with the Federal Community Defender Office for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, where she represents indigent defendants in state and federal custody who are seeking post-conviction relief. She is a nationally recognized expert in habeas corpus litigation and, as evidence of the regard in which she is held, taught future lawyers as an adjunct professor at the Drexel University Thomas R. Kline School of Law. But Ms. Freeman's credentials are not alone the reason I write to advocate for her. First, while it has always been a desirable goal, our nation now more than ever needs broad perspectives from those dispensing justice. This is important both as a matter of reality and of optics. In terms of reality, it is important that justice be dispensed by people willing to ask, "why so?" In terms of optics, it is important to dispel the myth that the qualifications, experience and ability of people of color, and women of color in particular, are lesser and more easily minimized than those of individuals who are not people of color. School children need to see and be inspired by people in positions of importance. Some will see a person they could become; others will see a person their classmate could become. Adults, both within and outside of the judicial system need to be reminded that anyone can possess intelligence and insight, and that justice and fairness can be delivered by people who look like them -- and by those who do not.

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Ms. Freeman's confirmation as a Third Circuit judge would be both historic and symbolic. It would be historic because she would be the first African American female to serve on the court. It would be symbolic because it would serve as a reminder that justice should be expected by everyone – and can be dispensed by anyone. I hope you agree and will vote to confirm Ms. Freeman to the Third Circuit Court of Appeals.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "JoAnne A. Epps". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

JoAnne A. Epps
Senior Advisor to the President &
Professor of Law