

January 28, 2022

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

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

On behalf of the following 60 interfaith organizations representing millions of people across the United States, we write in strong support of Nancy Abudu's nomination to the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit. Our organizations collectively represent a broad spectrum of people of faith, united by the theological belief that each person is created in the image of God, and that every person is worthy of dignity and respect. Ms. Abudu is an exceptionally well qualified nominee who has had a distinguished career working to defend and preserve the rights of many individuals, including some of our society's most at risk and marginalized people.

Ms. Abudu's professionalism, integrity, and deep experience have prepared her well to serve honorably as a judge on the Eleventh Circuit. Early in her career, Ms. Abudu worked as an associate in a large law firm and then as a staff attorney for the Eleventh Circuit. In that position, Ms. Abudu had many opportunities to work with judges and to observe the advocates who represented clients before the court. In 2005, Ms. Abudu made a career change that would enable her to use her education, energy, and talents to defend and protect the constitutional rights guaranteed to all Americans. That work, in positions of ever-increasing responsibility with the ACLU and now with SPLC, has focused on providing legal representation to many of those least able to represent themselves.

Among the many cases Ms. Abudu has litigated over the years are several in which she advocated on behalf of religious accommodation rights for people of faith. In one case, Ms. Abudu served as co-lead counsel representing a Collier County, Florida police officer who alleged that he had been subjected to religious discrimination during his employment with the sheriff's office, in violation of Title VII. This person, a Hasidic Jew, alleged that his supervisors would frequently make fun of his attire, routinely schedule him to work on Saturdays, and try to pressure him into eating pork and other prohibited foods — even though they were aware that his faith prohibited him from doing these things. Another case in which Ms. Abudu served as lead counsel involved Muslim prisoners incarcerated in the Miami Dade county jail who were being denied Halal meals. That case ended in a settlement in which the plaintiffs and other similarly situated individuals began receiving Halal means and secured additional accommodations during Ramadan.

Ms. Abudu has also represented veterans and others with disabilities, individuals experiencing homelessness, and people seeking to exercise the right to vote. Her extraordinary talents and leadership were recognized this year when Ms. Abudu was selected to serve as an advisor and mentor for Harvard Law School students considering jobs in public interest as a prestigious Wasserstein Fellow. She has also served as an international election observer in Albania, as a member of the American Bar Association's Standing Committee on Election Law, and the ABA's Working Group on Building Trust in the American Justice System.

Ms. Abudu's entire career has demonstrated a deep commitment to the highest ideals of justice and equality — and to the ethical treatment of every human being. She has always represented her clients zealously, as an ethical lawyer's oath requires, and with good judgment, excellence, and integrity. Given the array of issues considered by the Eleventh Circuit, including a range of religious liberty issues, Ms. Abudu's background and experience have prepared her well to serve with distinction on the court.

If confirmed, we are confident that Ms. Abudu will uphold her oath as a judge with equal dedication by applying the Constitution and laws of our country in a fair, open-minded, and impartial manner. We urge you to support Nancy Abudu's nomination to the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit.

Sincerely,

National

African American Ministers in Action
Anti-Defamation League
Avodah
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
Catholics for Choice
Circle Sanctuary
Freedom From Religion Foundation
ICNA Council for Social Justice
Interfaith Voices for Reproductive Justice
Jewish Democratic Council of America
Keshet
Maryknoll
Muslim Advocates
National Council of Jewish Women
North American Islamic Foundation, Inc.
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
The Shalom Center
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
United Church of Christ, Washington DC Office
Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual

State

Americans for Democratic Action Iowa
Carolina Jews for Justice
Indiana Muslim Advocacy Network
Islamic Society of Tulsa, Oklahoma
Jewish Community Action
National Council of Jewish Women, California
National Council of Jewish Women, Florida
National Council of Jewish Women, Georgia
National Council of Jewish Women, Illinois
National Council of Jewish Women, Maryland
National Council of Jewish Women, Michigan
National Council of Jewish Women, New Jersey
National Council of Jewish Women, Ohio
National Council of Jewish Women, Pennsylvania
National Council of Jewish Women, Texas
National Council of Jewish Women, Washington
Nebraska Religious Council for Reproductive Freedom
Pastors For Florida Children
SisterReach
Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice

Local

Congregation of our Lady of Zion, NY
Faith Commons, Dallas, TX
Jewish Democratic Women's Salon, Atlanta (GA)
National Council of Jewish Women, Atlanta (GA) Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Arizona Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Austin (TX) Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Chicago North Shore (IL) Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Cleveland (OH) Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Greater Dallas (TX) Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Greater Kansas City (MO) Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Lakeville (NY) Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Minnesota Section
National Council of Jewish Women, New York Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Peninsula (NY) Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Rockland (NY) Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Sacramento (CA) Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Saddleback (CA) Section
National Council of Jewish Women, South Cook (IL) Section
National Council of Jewish Women, St. Louis (MO) Section
Tri-Faith Initiative, Omaha, NE