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ASIAN AMERICAN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION OF MASSACHUSETTS

September 26, 2022

Senator Dick Durbin
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Chuck Grassley
United States Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Judge Myong Joun for United States District Court vacancy in the District
of Massachusetts

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

We write on behalf of the Asian-American Lawyers Association of
Massachusetts (AALAM) to express our unreserved support of the nomination of
Judge Myong Joun to serve as a judge on the United States District Court for the
District of Massachusetts. Judge Joun is a past AALAM president, director and
long-time member.

AALAM has served the Asian American legal community and worked on
improving the administration of law and justice in the Commonwealth of
Massachusetts since 1984. AALAM has approximately 350 members, and it is
the largest Asian American legal community organization in Massachusetts. Its
current and past judge members include U.S. District Judge Theodore Chuang,
U.S. District Judge Angel Kelley, U.S. District Judge Indira Talwani,
Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Justice Fernande R.V. Duffly (Ret.),
Judge Jason Chan, Judge Richard J. Chin (Ret.), Judge Catherine Ham, Judge
Maynard Kirpalani, Judge Jack Lu, Judge Tejal Mehta, Judge George Phelan,
Judge Sookyoung Shin, Judge Sabita Singh, Judge Eleanor Sinnott, Judge Gloria
Tan, and Judge Paul Yee (Ret.).

Throughout his career, Judge Joun has demonstrated a commitment to public
service and access to justice. Since his 2014 appointment to the Boston
Municipal Court by Governor Deval Patrick, Judge Joun has adjudicated
thousands of criminal and civil cases and written over a hundred opinions. The
Boston Municipal Court is a first-tier trial court with general jurisdiction over
matters in two of the Commonwealth's 351 municipalities. Its jurisdiction
includes felonies and misdemeanors which do not require a state prison sentence,
felonies punishable by a sentence of up to five years, and civil cases where the
likely recovery is less than \$50,000. Many of the litigants are from low-income
households and minority communities, and they often appear *pro se*. As a judge
in a busy urban court, Judge Joun is keenly aware of the interaction between the
courts and the community and the issues and challenges faced by the court and
the litigants. Prior to his elevation to the bench, he was an experienced litigator
who sought to protect the rights of those who are vulnerable and most in need. In
his practice, Judge Joun represented individuals in criminal, civil rights, and
complex class action suits and tried to conclusion approximately twenty cases in
state and federal courts.

AALAM

c/o Boston Bar Association, 16 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108
www.aalam.org

Judge Joun's contributions to AALAM have left lasting impressions upon its members and he continues to serve as mentor. Stephen Chow, an AALAM member since the 1980s and a board member since 1996, says, "Judge Joun, in his leadership of AALAM and consideration of community and professional matters that came before it, was consistent in his attentiveness to and due respect for views from all backgrounds. Never loud or strident in his positions, Judge Joun shows the kind of quiet strength that commands confidence that his decisions judiciously apply established law to fairly considered evidence and arguments." Judge Jason Chan, who was recently appointed to the Massachusetts bench, says, "Judge Joun was one of the first people that I reached out to when I was confirmed to the Massachusetts State District Court this summer. Since I began my legal career in 2007, Judge Joun has served as my inspiration and I would not be where I am today without his steady guidance and mentorship. When I joined the judiciary, he counseled me to be patient, thoughtful and thorough with my decisions and demeanor."

Judge Joun was also integral to the establishment of AALAM's Community Service Committee and its Advocacy Committee. During his term as chair of the Advocacy Committee, AALAM joined the amici brief supporting the plaintiffs in *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health*, the Supreme Judicial Court case which legalized same-sex marriage in Massachusetts. In addition to his work with AALAM, Judge Joun has held leadership positions with the Massachusetts Bar Association, the National Lawyers Guild, and the American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts.

AALAM is particularly proud to provide this endorsement of Judge Joun because his story reflects the aspirations of those who have immigrated to this country. Judge Joun's mother immigrated to the United States with three small children and only \$46 in her pocket. Growing up in New York City, Judge Joun's future was far from assured. He attended Lane High School, which had at that time a fifty percent dropout rate and a reputation for being among the worst high schools in the country. Despite these challenges, Judge Joun went on to graduate from high school and graduated *magna cum laude* from the University of Massachusetts Boston and from Suffolk University Law School. While pursuing his degrees, Judge Joun served for six years in the United States Army as part of the Massachusetts National Guard.

Judge Joun is an inspiration for those who have come to this country holding little more than the American Dream, and his perspective is underrepresented in the judiciary. The Asian American community is the fastest-growing racial ethnic group in the U.S. electorate, but there are only thirty-two Asian Pacific American judges among the 674 federal district court judges as of July 2022. See <https://www.napaba.org/page/JudicialNom>.

Judge Joun is an accomplished jurist and attorney who is eminently qualified to serve as a district judge and we strongly urge you to confirm him to the United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts.

We thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Emily L. Sy
President

AALAM

c/o Boston Bar Association, 16 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108

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