



PRESIDENT  
RAKIM BROOKS

CHAIR  
PAULETTE MEYER

February 14, 2023

The Honorable Richard Durbin  
Chairman  
Senate Judiciary Committee

Dear Chairman Durbin,

On behalf of the Alliance for Justice (AFJ), a national association representing more than 150 public interest and civil rights organizations, I write to enthusiastically support the confirmation of Jeffrey Irvine Cummings to the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois.

Judge Cummings has deep roots in the Northern District. After earning his bachelor's degree from Michigan State University in 1984 and his J.D. *cum laude* from Northwestern University School of Law in 1987, Mr. Cummings clerked for the Honorable Ann Claire Williams on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. After his clerkship, Judge Cummings spent nearly 30 years practicing law at Miner, Barnhill & Garland in Chicago, eventually serving as co-managing partner. With decades of civil rights and employment discrimination litigation experience, Mr. Cummings will bring robust knowledge, skill and an important perspective to the bench.

Judge Cummings has extensive experience in federal and state litigation, representing plaintiffs, governments, unions, whistleblowers, non-profit and for-profit corporations. For example, Judge Cummings secured \$630,000 settlement for a class of Black workers who sued Area Erectors Inc. over allegations of firing employees based on race. Judge Cummings also represented plaintiffs in civil rights violations outside the employment context. Further, Judge Cummings' experience as a U.S. magistrate judge for the Northern District of Illinois has thoroughly prepared him for the rigors of this role.

Outside of the courtroom, Judge Cummings' commitment to fairness and equal justice under the law is also demonstrated through his deep involvement in the Chicago legal community. Since 2019, Judge Cummings has sat on the Board of Directors for the Chicago Chapter of the Federal Bar Association. From 1994 to 2018, Judge Cummings was on the Board of Directors of the Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. Prior to his appointment to magistrate judge, Judge Cummings served as an Administrative Hearing Officer for the City of Chicago's Commission on Human Relations from 1994 to 2019. He also served as a Hearing Officer for the Chicago Police Board from 2016 to 2019. Further, as a magistrate judge, he regularly speaks with law students and conducts educational seminars for the public sponsored by non-profit organizations, schools and bar associations.

Eleven Dupont Circle NW, Suite 500 | Washington, DC 20036 | [www.afj.org](http://www.afj.org) | t:202-822-6070

*Field Offices*

Dallas | Houston | Los Angeles | San Francisco

Judge Cummings' commitment to public service has not gone unnoticed. He received the Professor Joyce Anne Hughes Legacy Award from the Northwestern Pritzker School of Law's Back Law Students Association in 2022. In 2021, he was awarded Northwestern's Dawn Clark Netsch Public Service Award. He received the Cook County Bar Association's Judicial Service Award in 2020 and was included in "The National Black Lawyers: Top 100" from 2015 to 2019.

Given his exemplary qualifications outlined herein, the Senate should expeditiously confirm Judge Jeffrey Irvine Cummings to the U.S. District Court of the Northern District of Illinois.

Sincerely,

*Rakim H.D. Brooks*

Rakim Brooks  
President, Alliance for Justice