



PRESIDENT
RAKIM BROOKS

CHAIR
PAULETTE MEYER

November 30, 2022

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Chairman
Senate Judiciary Committee

Dear Chairman Durbin:

On behalf of the Alliance for Justice (AFJ), a national association representing over 150 public interest and civil rights organizations, I write to support the confirmation of Judge Rita Lin to the United States District Court for the Northern District of California.

Born in Oakland, California, Judge Lin graduated *magna cum laude* from Harvard University in 2000 and Harvard Law School in 2003. Justice Lin has experience in both public service and private practice, making her a well-rounded candidate for the federal bench. After law school, Judge Lin served as a law clerk for Judge Sandra Lynch of the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit in Boston. In 2004, she moved back to California, working as a litigation associate in the San Francisco office of the law firm Morrison & Foerster LLP.

During her tenure at Morrison & Foerster LLP, she gained vast experience in complex civil litigation, eventually becoming a partner at the law firm and managing teams of attorneys across multiple offices nationwide. She also engaged in significant pro bono work while in private practice, including working on landmark litigation to overturn the Defense of Marriage Act—demonstrating her commitment to equality under the law. Judge Lin has a significant public service record and ties to the Northern District of California, where she served as a federal prosecutor from 2014-2018, investigating complex criminal conspiracies, including developing a program for investigating doctors and other medical professionals for illegally proscribing opioids.

In addition to her experience in litigation, Judge Lin's judicial experience makes her an ideal choice for the federal bench. In 2018, she was appointed by California Governor Jerry Brown to serve as a judge in the San Francisco County Superior Court. She has presided over hundreds of felony criminal cases, grappling with complex questions of evidence and due process. While on the bench, she has also sought to improve the administration of criminal justice, serving on the Superior Court's Executive Committee, Bail Review & Pretrial Detention Committee, and Adult Probation Oversight Committee.

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Judge Lin's extraordinary skills in the courtroom gained her recognition in the field. She was chosen as one of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association's "Best Lawyers Under 40" in 2017 as well as chosen by the Daily Journal's "Top 100 Women Attorneys in California" in 2012. Further, she has been recognized for her significant pro bono work, earning her the Bay Area Lawyers for Individual Freedom's Legal Service Award in 2012.

Not only is Judge Lin qualified for her appointment to the Northern District of California – she would make history on that bench. If confirmed, Judge Lin would be the second Asian American woman, and first ever Taiwanese American woman, to sit on the Northern District of California. It is critical that our courts reflect the breadth of the communities they serve, and the confirmation of Judge Lin would be a step closer to equitable representation of Asian Americans on our federal courts.

Additionally, during her Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing, Judge Lin disclosed that she has a hearing disability. An estimated [one in four adults](#) in the United States — 61 million people — has a disability. Despite the prevalence of disabilities throughout American society, only a [handful of judges](#) currently sitting on the federal bench identify as persons with disabilities, and Judge Lin is one of the first of Biden's nominees to do so. She clearly understands the importance of a fair playing field and is dedicated to ensuring the legal system works for all people.

Judge Lin is a fair-minded judge who understands the importance of the rule of law in the pursuit of justice. Her experiences in public service, as a private litigator, and as a judge make her aptly prepared to serve in this role. For these reasons, I urge you to expeditiously confirm Judge Rita Lin to the United States District Court for the Northern District of California.

Sincerely,

Rakim H.D. Brooks

Rakim Brooks
President, Alliance for Justice