

We, members of the Atlanta Jewish Community, Support the Nomination of Nancy Abudu to the
Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals

On December 23, President Biden nominated Nancy Abudu to serve as a judge on the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals, which covers Georgia, Florida, and Alabama. Ms. Abudu is an exceptional nominee for a prestigious position on the Eleventh Circuit both because of her impressive personal background and her careerlong commitment to civil rights and ensuring justice for all.

Born to immigrant parents from Ghana, Abudu would be the first black woman to sit on the Eleventh Circuit and the first person of color from Georgia.

Abudu's legal qualifications are without question. She has devoted the majority of her legal career to working in the public interest, first as a staff attorney for the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals and then at the ALCU Voting Right's Project as Staff Attorney and Senior Staff Counsel, at the ACLU of Florida as Legal Director, and finally at the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) as Deputy Legal Director.

Throughout her career, Abudu has focused on advancing voting rights, including establishing the Voting Rights Practice Group at SPLC. In her various public interest roles, Abudu has championed voting rights issues such as enfranchising convicted felons who have served their sentences and protecting the voting rights of persons with disabilities. Abudu has also worked to protect reproductive rights and the rights of the LGBT community as well as the constitutional rights of the criminally accused.

Abudu's legal work in general warrants the support of the Jewish community because she encompasses the concept of tikkun olam (improving the world) and the direction from the Torah that "Justice, justice shall you pursue." However, Abudu has worked specifically on behalf of the Jewish community to protect the freedom of religion guaranteed by the First Amendment. In *Newmark v. Collier Co. Sheriff's Office*, Abudu and the ACLU of Florida brought a federal lawsuit against the Collier County Sheriff's Office on behalf of Benjamin Newmark, an employee who was repeatedly discriminated against for observing the tenets of his Hasidic Jewish faith. The lawsuit alleged that Newmark's superiors would frequently make fun of his attire, schedule him to work on Shabbat, and try to pressure him into eating pork and other prohibited foods even though they were aware that his faith required him to obey the laws of kashrut. Newmark also alleged that his Jewish faith played a role in his demotion within the Sheriff's Office.

Abudu's personal and professional background enable her to understand how the law impacts the most vulnerable members of our community, and how state action can either intentionally or inadvertently result in discrimination or deprive citizens of their constitutional rights. In this regard, Abudu's life experiences are relevant to her position and would inform her legal analysis as an appellate judge.

As Jews, we are instructed by the Torah to "appoint magistrates and officials for your tribes . . . and they shall govern the people with due justice." (Deuteronomy 16:18) We are confident that Nancy Abudu would ensure due justice if given the opportunity to serve on the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals.

Signed:

Michael Baumrind

Lois Frank

Abbie Fuksman

Brandon Cory Goldberg

Graham Goldberg

Michael Jacobs

Harold Kirtz

Andrew Lewis

Esther Panitch

Scott Rafshoon

The Panitch Law Group

Victoria Raggs

Michael Rosenzweig

Atlanta Jews of Color Council

Jewish Democratic Council of America

Mamie Dayan Vogel

Matthew Weiss