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The  
**Barristers' Association**  
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1735 Market Street, Suite A234, Philadelphia, PA 19103  
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August 1, 2022

The Honorable Richard Durbin  
Chair  
Committee of the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

To The Honorable Richard Durbin:

The Barristers' Association of Philadelphia, Inc. was founded in 1950 to address the needs of African-American attorneys in Philadelphia. Since then, we have been a committed catalyst for change and a voice of advocacy for correcting historical injustices in this City. We have played an intricate role in elevating Black voices and addressing the needs of our community.

The American judicial system has a history littered with the negation of equality and noble attempts of correction thereafter. The road for Black law students, practitioners, judges, and legal scholars is filled with obstacles presented as a result of the systemic barriers designed throughout history to prevent and discourage our inclusion in the legal profession. Organizations such as the Barristers' Association located in every major city demonstrate the existence of excellent Black attorneys in every area of practice. Yet, our courts are a poor reflection of diversity in practice. In recent years, conversations of equality and inclusion have been on the forefront of every industry. While we stand in this very moment of history, more definitive steps must be taken to put words to action and demand that representation on the bench reflect reality.

The Barristers' Association has stood in support of multiple recent judicial nominees put forward by President Biden. We continue to support diversity amongst those who administer justice within our country. The Barristers' Association proudly supports the nomination of Kelley B. Hodge, Esq. Ms. Hodge's career has taken shape in many forms. At the onset of her career, she served for many years as a Senior Assistant Public Defender in Richmond, Virginia. In 2004, she joined the District Attorney's Office of Philadelphia, where she was eventually promoted to Assistant Chief of both the Municipal Court Unit and subsequently the Juvenile Court Unit. Ms. Hodge went on to serve as Acting Director of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency in Pennsylvania, after which she became the Safe Schools Advocate for several years. In 2017, Ms. Hodge was selected by the Court of Common Pleas Board of Judges to serve as interim District Attorney of Philadelphia where she led one of the largest prosecutorial offices in the country. Ms. Hodge was the first and only Black woman to serve as District Attorney of Philadelphia. From there, Ms. Hodge continued her career path to become Of Counsel at Elliott Greenleaf, P.C. on to becoming a Partner at Fox Rothschild, L.L.P. Throughout her career, Ms. Hodge has also lent her experience to molding the minds of law students through her adjunct professorship at the University of Pennsylvania, Drexel University, and the University of Richmond. Ms. Hodge's immaculate career path speaks to her talent, dedication, and well-respected practice in both Pennsylvania and Virginia.

The Barristers' Association of Philadelphia, Inc. proudly supports the nomination of Kelley B. Hodge, Esq. Her confirmation will not only serve as a step toward adequate representation but also as recognition of her stellar career.

Respectfully,

Adara L. Combs, Esq.

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