



June 21, 2022

Senator Durbin

Senator Grassley

Members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am writing this letter of recommendation on behalf of Ana Reyes, for the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. In my 10 years of leadership with the YMCA Youth and Government programs nationally, I have had the opportunity to work with thousands of passionate, devoted, and talented volunteers. Students and adults drawn to the Youth and Government program are committed to the ideals of civic engagement, service learning, diversity and inclusion, equity, and –above all–servant leadership. When these characteristics are the *default* profile for a member of this community, it takes a truly remarkable individual to stand out among their peers as an exemplary leader and individual. Ana Reyes is, without a doubt, just such an individual. Over the past 10 years, I have had the privilege of working directly with Ms. Reyes – as a volunteer in our judicial programs and an actively invested supporter of our organization. Throughout my time interacting with her, it has been clear Ms. Reyes is driven to make a difference in her home state, and for its upcoming generation of leaders.

Ms. Reyes' primary interaction with our organization – which hosts the largest Youth and Government program in the nation – is as a volunteer in our judicial programs. We run both a model state supreme court and a model international court of justice. Both programs serve high school students who prepare written briefs and oral arguments to deliver at statewide conferences. For several years, not only has Ms. Reyes flown in to volunteer as a judge at these programs, she has also spent countless hours volunteer advising, mentoring, and supporting the teams. She utilizes her expertise and experience to break down complicated legalese and cases so our students can work through the process and present their cases to the best of their abilities. She acts with compassion, encouragement, patience, and energy; she is annually a “fan-favorite” of our participants.

Outside of these preparations and presentations, Ms. Reyes takes the time to speak to interested students about her journey as an attorney, her advice and thoughts on pursuing the legal field, and how she has turned personal passion into effective advocacy and change-making efforts. She especially loves to focus on our refugee and immigrant students, and acts as a role model and mentor in showing them that they too can pursue their passions and interests. For many, she is the first adult who cannot only understand their particular journey, but also shows an express and direct interest in their success. She absolutely changes lives each year in this way.

KENTUCKY YMCA YOUTH ASSOCIATION

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For the past several years, Ms. Reyes has also chosen to financially support our programs' scholarship funds – in particular our model United Nations conference. These funds allow students to attend and participate in a model UN experience, to learn more about international affairs, and act within the primary UN organs, as representatives of countries or the UN. For this program, Ms. Reyes is one of our largest supporters in both monetary support and community service. Once again, she takes her personal experiences and passions, and pays her success forward to the upcoming generation. She does not just donate scholarship funding though; she also speaks with the school(s) she supports and meets the students – asking them about why they are participating, how they hope to affect change, and how she can help them along their way. Should ever a sudden need arise to scholarship an additional student, Ms. Reyes is my first phone call; and she never turns down the opportunity to extend more aid.

In my experience, Ms. Reyes is a rare model for serving her community and leading with honor, integrity, and compassion. She is a remarkable person of character, with interests squarely aligned with this position, professional experience to underscore her success in such a role, and the strong character to be a model ambassador of federal judgeship. I cannot imagine a person better suited to this appointment than Ana Reyes. The Kentucky YMCA has been honored to have her as a supporter of our organization, and I am confident her dedication, talent and commitment to serving others will be an asset to the District of Columbia.

Thank you for your consideration,

Elizabeth J. Malcom
President & CEO
Kentucky YMCA Youth Association