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February 7, 2023

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary
135 Hart Senate Office building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Letter in Support of the Honorable LaShonda A. Hunt – Nominee for United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

On behalf of the Black Women Lawyers' Association of Greater Chicago, Inc. (BWLA), we write to convey our enthusiastic and unequivocal support for the nomination of BWLA Past President, the Honorable LaShonda A. Hunt, to the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois.

Judge LaShonda A. Hunt is a dedicated, longtime member and supporter of BWLA. She served at the helm of the organization as President from 2015-2016 and has served on several committees for nearly three decades. Through her service to BWLA, Judge Hunt has exhibited superior integrity and judgment, even temperament, and an undeniably genuine sincerity towards others – qualities that make her an exceptional nominee for the highest court in Illinois.

Since its inception in 1987, BWLA has continuously worked to identify and address issues unique to Black women lawyers and judges, promote excellence in the legal profession, encourage the inclusion of Black women lawyers in the administration of justice in the legal system, provide professional development and resources, and further career opportunities and relationships to support Black women in the legal profession in Chicago. BWLA is comprised of thousands of members nationwide and has an opulent history of illustrious and influential members in the legal profession, including the first judge of color on the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, BWLA Co-Founder Ret. Judge Ann Claire Williams, the second Black woman and first public defender of the same court, the Honorable Candace Jackson-Akiwumi, and many other highly accomplished federal and state court judges and attorneys, international business leaders, corporate and non-profit general counsels,

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government leaders, partners and associates at law firms, professors in academia, and law students. Judge Hunt represents a rich legacy of Black women attorneys and has greatly contributed to the profession through a stellar career as an attorney and judge.

Born and raised in Chicago, Illinois, Judge Hunt began her legal career in 1995. Throughout the duration of her career, she has demonstrated service to her country and particularly the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. Judge Hunt worked as a staff attorney for the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit and later as a law clerk for Judge William J. Hibbler on the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. Following her clerkship, Judge Hunt was an assistant United States attorney in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Illinois from 2003 to 2005 and again from 2010 to 2015. She then became chief legal counsel for the Illinois Department of Corrections from 2015-2016. She was then appointed in 2017 to a 14-year term as a United States bankruptcy judge for the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Illinois.

Judge Hunt has been a dedicated BWLA member since she became an attorney. She has volunteered tireless time and effort to uplifting the organization through her unrivaled leadership and mentorship to numerous budding Black women lawyers. Judge Hunt has held multiple leadership positions within the organization, most notably as President of the Board of Directors, where she developed stellar programming that provided BWLA members access to general counsels of Fortune 500 companies and increased mentorship and professional development opportunities for minority law students. Judge Hunt was BWLA's 2021 recipient of its Vanguard Award; the highest honor given to a BWLA member. BWLA will forever be indebted to Judge Hunt's invaluable contribution to the fulfillment of its mission.

The Honorable LaShonda A. Hunt is a shining example of exemplary leadership and service to BWLA, the legal profession, and the State of Illinois. We have no doubt that she will continue to serve our country with the highest dignity and honor. BWLA strongly supports President Joseph Biden's nomination of Judge LaShonda A. Hunt to serve on the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois and urges her swift confirmation by the United States Senate.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Elsa Andrianifahanana
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Black Women Lawyer' Association of Greater Chicago, Inc.

Nakhia Crossley.
BWLA Past President 2021-2022
Director, Regulatory Affairs
ADT

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