



RICHARD T. FIELDS
ASSOCIATE JUSTICE

Court of Appeal
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOURTH APPELLATE DISTRICT
DIVISION TWO

3389 Twelfth Street
Riverside, California 92501
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January 18, 2022

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Sent Via Email Only To:

Ravi Doshi, Counsel
Office of Senator Alex Padilla
Ravi_Doshi@judiciary-dem.senate.gov

Re: ***Letter of Support for the Honorable Sunshine Sykes,
Nominee for the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California***

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

I am very pleased to have the honor of writing a letter of recommendation for Judge Sunshine Sykes in support of her confirmation as a judge of the United States District Court for the Central District of California. I have known Judge Sykes for approximately eight years. I first met her while she was an attorney for the Riverside County Counsel's Office. Later, she and I were colleagues on the Riverside County Superior Court from the time of her appointment in 2013 until my appointment and confirmation to the Court of Appeal in 2017. As an appellate justice, I have reviewed her work extensively. She and I also have served together on the Governor's Judicial Selection Advisory Committee for approximately two years.

During this time, I have had the opportunity to get to know Judge Sykes well—both as a person and as a jurist. I find Judge Sykes to be extraordinary in every way. As a person, she is kind, very thoughtful, and possesses tremendous insight. As a jurist, she is smart, conscientious, patient, and courteous. She has handled the most complex civil cases that come through our system. Many of the judges in our county prefer not to have a civil assignment because of the volume of reading and

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the seemingly unending variety of cases, which make it difficult to gain expertise in any particular area. Judge Sykes took on the civil assignment and has thrived. She worked hard and did so in such a skillful manner that she was elevated to hear the “complex” civil caseload. The “complex” civil calendar is assigned to judges who have demonstrated the highest degree of knowledge, skill, and ability in presiding over difficult cases.

As an appellate justice, I have had the opportunity to review her rulings. In doing so, I have been so impressed by her knowledge, thoughtfulness, and legal reasoning on the cases she hears. On many occasions, I have commented to myself and my staff about the excellence of her work.

In addition to hearing complex cases, Judge Sykes also was appointed presiding judge of the appellate department of the Riverside County Superior Court. As such, she not only manages the appellate department, but she is responsible for writing opinions on a variety of appeals, both civil and criminal. Judge Sykes has more than seven years on the bench and has proved herself to be an exceptional jurist. It is important to note that she has also served as the court’s full-time night magistrate, giving her substantial experience reviewing search warrants, requests for emergency protective orders, and bail review requests. If confirmed, this experience will serve her well on the federal bench.

As an attorney, Judge Sykes’s experience included substantial work as a civil litigator and juvenile dependency lawyer. She is an expert on the Indian Child Welfare Act and has provided training to judges and lawyers across the State of California.

Judge Sykes has accomplished everything I have referenced above, and more, while raising four young daughters. She has found the time to attend to the girls’ homework and other activities while still performing her work at the highest level.

Despite all her accomplishments, Judge Sykes remains humble and possesses an outstanding demeanor. I was thrilled when she told me she was applying to the federal bench (even though it would be a tremendous loss to us) because I believe she is an outstanding candidate and has much to offer the federal bench.

I strongly support the confirmation of Judge Sykes to the United States District Court without any reservation and with the utmost confidence that she will be an outstanding jurist.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (951) 782-2630.

Respectfully yours,



RICHARD T. FIELDS
Associate Justice

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