



April 26, 2022

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Chair
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin, Ranking Member Grassley, and Committee Members:

On behalf of the overwhelming majority of Catholics who believe in religious freedom and the right to equal protections and individual liberties for all, I write to express Catholics for Choice's support for the swift and intentional confirmation of Nancy Abudu to serve as a United States Circuit Judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit.

As Catholics, we believe in seven key principles of social justice that guide our work to dismantle obstructions to comprehensive healthcare and to affirm the capacity of all people to make moral decisions about their lives. We are called to participate in public life, ensuring that we and our government officials protect and care for all of our neighbors equally, since we are all created in the image of God. The decisions made by our federal courts touch on all of the issues that matter most to us as people of faith — care for the marginalized, access to education, the right to be protected from violence, the right to workplace protections and healthcare, and the right to thrive in our communities with dignity — and have far-reaching consequences on the ability to exercise our civil and human rights. As such, we believe that our federal judiciary must work for the people, not against us.

Catholics for Choice supports the confirmation of independent, qualified, and diverse federal judges with a demonstrated commitment to (1) upholding the First Amendment's protection of freedom of and from religion, (2) safeguarding the fundamental constitutional rights of equal protection, dignity, and privacy, including the right to have an abortion, grounded in the Fourteenth Amendment, and (3) advancing justice, civil rights, equal rights, and individual liberties for all.

Nancy Abudu, a first-generation Ghanaian American, would be the first Black woman to serve on the Eleventh Circuit. Throughout her career, she has ensured the rights of everyone are protected, no matter their race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or background. Ms. Abudu's legal experience is vast and expansive; she has led aspects of complex litigation in both the state and federal courts and established herself as a top civil rights litigator and expert in voting rights.

Notably, Ms. Abudu has worked to safeguard abortion access, representing medical providers challenging a 24-hour waiting period in *Gainesville Woman Care v. Florida*. Waiting periods

In Good Conscience

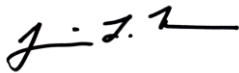
unnecessarily delay essential reproductive healthcare and attempt to interfere in patient decision-making that must rightfully be based on their own consciences and circumstances. Ms. Abudu was able to successfully block the law's implementation while litigation proceeds.

Additionally, she has worked to uphold both freedom of and from religion, a value central to Catholics who honor our nation's religious pluralism and diversity and value all people as moral agents. In *CAIR Fla v. Miami-Dade County*, Ms. Abudu effectively proved a violation of the First Amendment's Free Exercise Clause and secured a proper diet for incarcerated Muslim detainees denied proper Halal meals while exceptions were made for Jewish and Christian detainees. She also represented a Hasidic Jew who alleged that his supervisors at a Florida sheriff's office would discriminate against him by making fun of his attire, scheduling him to work on Saturdays, and pressuring him to eat pork and other prohibited foods.

The duty of the Senate to provide advice and consent on judicial nominations is sacrosanct, written into the very Constitution that Senators swore an oath to support and defend. We need Senators to perform their duty both thoroughly and expeditiously. Catholics for Choice calls upon the Senate to confirm Nancy Abudu to the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit with all deliberate speed.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to Shannon Russell, Director of Policy, at srussell@catholicsforchoice.org with any questions or for additional information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. L. Manson", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jamie L. Manson
President, Catholics for Choice