

February 7, 2022

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Chair, Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC

Re: Nomination of Nina Morrison to be United States District Judge

Dear Chair Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

We respectfully write in support of Nina Morrison's nomination to serve on the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York.

We are crime survivors whose cases resulted in post-conviction exonerations of the individuals we believed were responsible for the crimes. For me, Shannon Coleman, my family's case involved the horrific assault, burglary, and murder of my elderly aunt, Louise Talley. For me, Jennifer Thompson, my case involved a brutal attack and assault that I endured as a college student in North Carolina. In both of our cases, we learned more than a decade after the crimes that the men who were convicted were, in fact, innocent, and that the true perpetrators were not apprehended at the time. In both cases, post-conviction DNA testing resulted in biological evidence that demonstrated without any doubt that the criminal justice system had made a terrible mistake, not just for the innocent men who were wrongly convicted but for we crimes survivors and our families, as well.

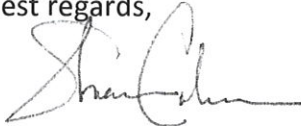
Cases like ours' present complex issues of fairness, justice, victimization, trauma, and public safety, and it takes attorneys with immense integrity and humanity to navigate them in a way that does not cause additional suffering to the victims and survivors of the original crime. Many attorneys who represent people in prison zealously pursue their release without regard to the impact of their actions on the crime victims and survivors. In our experience, and the experiences of most victims and survivors, we are the first to be harmed but the last to be remembered. It is rare to encounter an attorney who cares for those of us who were hurt in the first instance. Ms. Morrison is one of the rare ones.

We each have known Ms. Morrison for many years, through her work for the Innocence Project. She is an incredibly smart, dedicated, and talented attorney. Perhaps more importantly for us, she is compassionate, fair, and respectful toward crime victims and survivors. Indeed, Ms. Morrison has strived to create equity and empathy for victims and survivors throughout the post-conviction criminal justice process. In her cases, Ms. Morrison has actively sought to ensure that victims and survivors received early and sufficient notification of renewed case activity, that they had access to professional support and victim services, and that they be treated with kindness in media coverage of the cases.

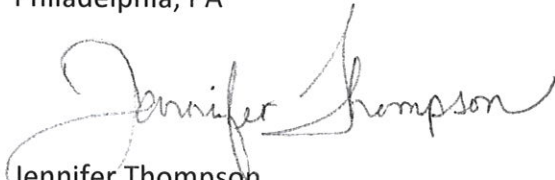
Based on Ms. Morrison's sensitive, equitable, and empathetic treatment of crime victims and survivors in the cases in which she has sought exoneration of innocent clients, and her overall conduct as an attorney, we are confident that she will bring immense integrity and humanity to the bench. Therefore, we earnestly and enthusiastically support her nomination and hope that it will be confirmed.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Kindest regards,



Shannon Coleman
Philadelphia, PA



Jennifer Thompson
Chapel Hill, NC