

**SHAREN WILSON**  
Criminal District Attorney  
Tarrant County

February 11, 2022

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin  
Chair, 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

**Re: Letter of Recommendation for Appointment of Nina Morrison as United States District Judge**

Dear Chair Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of Nina Morrison for her nomination to serve as United States District Judge of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York.

As the Criminal District Attorney of the nation's 15th most populous county, I have sought to uphold the duty of all prosecuting attorneys, not to convict, but to see that justice is done. Seeking justice is not about conviction rates or win-loss records but seeing that the correct result occurs. Each year, over 50,000 cases are filed within my office, each case requires careful review to determine whether there is sufficient admissible evidence that an offense has occurred, and that the case identifies the arrested person as being responsible for the commission of the offense. When warranted, my prosecutorial duty also includes seeking the death penalty, and defending death penalty convictions on appeal.

Through the evolution in forensic sciences, as well as changes in court opinions and legislation governing the criminal justice system, it is critical that my office remain at the forefront of developing and implementing mechanisms that ensure the rightful administration of justice, safeguarding that the guilty are convicted, and the innocent freed. As a result, my first year in office, I created the County's first Conviction Integrity Unit – one of only 17 in the nation at the time of its founding. The Conviction Integrity Unit or CIU, reviews cases from a neutral standpoint cognizable claim of actual innocence, and systemic issues which can result in wrongful convictions. Through CIU, my office has performed in-depth case review and has worked directly with the national Innocence Project. In partnership with Nina and the

national Innocence Project, we oversaw the motion to vacate the conviction of Fort Worth native John Nolley who had spent the last 19 years in prison on a life sentence for murder. One of the witnesses who testified against Nolley in his trial was a jailhouse informant, who it was later determined was unreliable and had lied about testifying in other trials. After the court vacated Mr. Nolley's conviction, based on the results of our extensive investigation, I then decided that our office should dismiss all charges against Mr. Nolley. This is an example of the work that Nina has led in her capacity as an attorney with the national Innocence Project.

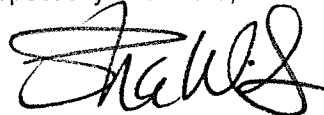
During the John Nolley case review, I appreciated Nina's ability to work collaboratively while still respecting the roles and responsibilities of the various participants in the criminal system and, especially the unique duties that prosecutors owe in post-conviction proceedings. One of the best illustrations of her understanding of this was demonstrated in the level of cooperation she provided, and the trust she exhibited in our office's review and re-investigation of the John Nolley case. Not only did she welcome the participation of the original law enforcement agency in the re-investigation, but she openly and genuinely embraced the willingness of law enforcement to engage fairly and conscientiously with the Conviction Integrity Unit.

One of our most important responsibilities as prosecutors is to disclose to the Defense any and all evidence the State has in its case against a defendant. This disclosure is commonly known as "Brady notice," after the 1963 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Brady v. Maryland*. This responsibility does not end with the defendant's conviction. Even after conviction, the State has an affirmative duty to turn over any material discovered at a later point that may be considered exculpatory evidence.

The importance of this practice is perhaps best known in Texas by "The Michael Morton Act," named for Michael Morton, a Texan who was found to have been convicted unjustly of the murder of his wife after spending almost 25 years in prison for the crime. Michael Morton is one of Nina's exonerated clients. Michael Morton has provided ethics training to my entire office and each new employee is provided a copy of his book, "Getting Life" which highlights his experience as a crime victim and defendant.

My career first began as a prosecutor in Tarrant County, in the same office I have chosen to end my career at the conclusion of this year. I have previously served as a State District Judge and am a lifelong Republican. Throughout my tenure in office, I have committed to be tough on crime and vigorous in the pursuit of justice and conviction integrity. While Nina and I may not agree on everything, we have found common ground in our respect for the principles of the criminal justice system and the expectation that those who participate in that system have the obligation to always do what is right. Nina is a person of integrity and has demonstrated the ability to be fair to all parties by following the law. She will promote public confidence in the integrity and impartiality of the law and judiciary process. Therefore, it is without hesitation that I recommend and support Nina's nomination for United States District Judge of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York.

Respectfully submitted,



Sharen Wilson

Tarrant County Criminal District Attorney

cc     Senator John Cornyn, United States Senator  
       Senator Ted Cruz, United States Senator