

July 25, 2022

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

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

Dear Chair Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

As current and former leaders of the Minnesota law enforcement community, we write to express our support for the nomination of Jerry Blackwell to be a U.S. District Court Judge for the District of Minnesota.

Mr. Blackwell has had a distinguished career working as a civil litigator in Minnesota for over 30 years. His work has earned him recognition from his peers in Minnesota and across the country. He is known as a fair, honest, and diligent attorney who has been sought after by businesses large and small across the United States. There is no doubt that Mr. Blackwell is eminently qualified to serve as a federal district court judge.

Although Mr. Blackwell has focused on civil litigation, he has demonstrated a commitment to equal justice through his pro bono service, his work in the community, and his mentorship of young attorneys. We also know that with a brother who served as a police sergeant, Mr. Blackwell appreciates that our peace and police officers put their lives on the line to defend the rule of law. We are confident that as a federal district court judge Mr. Blackwell will approach each case with an open mind and will apply the law consistently and fairly.

Finally, our communities are safer when the people we serve have confidence in our nation's public safety and criminal justice system. That confidence is strengthened when law enforcement officers, as well as the judges who preside in our courtrooms, reflect the diversity of our nation.

We respectfully urge the Senate Judiciary Committee to swiftly advance Mr. Blackwell's nomination and for the Senate to confirm him to the federal bench.

Sincerely,

William K. Finney

Undersheriff

Ramsey County Sheriff's Office

(Formerly Chief of Police, City of Saint Paul)

Mike Tusken

Chief of Police

Duluth Police Department

Wm. Blair Anderson

Chief of Police

St. Cloud Police Department