

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

July 25, 2022

RE: The Honorable Mia Roberts Perez, Judicial Nominee to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

We are a group of attorneys formerly employed by the Defender Association of Philadelphia. We write to you in enthusiastic support of the nomination of Judge Mia Roberts Perez to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. Our members include her former colleagues, supervisors, lawyers who litigate in her courtroom, and those familiar with her reputation in our local criminal justice system.

The Defender Association of Philadelphia is a private non-profit organization that contracts with the city of Philadelphia to provide public defense services. Established in 1934, the Association consistently ranks as one of the best public defender offices in the country. Like Judge Perez, we are proud alumni of this institution who have gone on to careers in private civil and criminal practices, government, academia, and other non-profit organizations. We each believe Judge Perez's experience as a public defender would bring a unique and valuable perspective to the court.

Judge Perez has a myriad of qualities that make her an excellent candidate for a seat on the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. We appreciate her intellect, dedication to her community, professionalism, and leadership. We choose to focus our support on three specific qualities of Judge Perez: fairness, a respect for humanity, and a strong work ethic.

Public defenders zealously represent their clients and fight tirelessly on their behalf. That right to counsel, enumerated in the Sixth Amendment, is an important safeguard to ensure the impartiality of the criminal justice process. As an advocate, Judge Perez vigorously – and successfully – defended her clients, ensuring they received a fair trial. Since her election to the Court of Common Pleas in 2016, Judge Perez's commitment to fairness remains steadfast. Judge Perez has a reputation for integrity among both prosecutors and criminal defense attorneys. Tasked with presiding over some of the most serious criminal cases in Philadelphia, Judge Perez has proven herself to be intelligent, compassionate, and ethical. In other words, she exemplifies judicial fairness.

As young attorneys at the Defender Association, we learned that the cases we handled were more than just police reports and crime scene photos. These cases are about real people. Judge Perez brings the sensitivity and grace developed during her tenure at the Defender Association to her courtroom. She treats every person appearing before her with civility and decorum – lawyers, victims, defendants, police officers, and witnesses alike. Judge Perez understands that each human being has intrinsic value and deserves respect.

A strong work ethic is necessary to succeed as a public defender. Failure to pursue all potential defenses or conduct all relevant legal research or investigation puts a client's liberty at risk. Fortunately, Judge Perez is a hard worker, and always has been. She continuously seeks to improve herself. As an advocate, her understanding of criminal procedure and the rules of evidence were exemplary. As a judge, her

judicial opinions are intelligent and well-reasoned. Her case records are clear and thorough. Her courtroom is run with efficiency and precision. Judge Perez's decisions are well-grounded in statutes and case law.

As alumni of the Defender Association of Philadelphia, we are in a unique position to give you insights on how Judge Perez's experience as a public defender helped shape her judicial temperament. Judge Perez's pursuit of fairness, her compassion for the individuals in her courtroom, and her strong work ethic are all directly related to her experience as a public defender. We respectfully submit these qualities would make Judge Perez an excellent United States District Judge in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Sincerely,

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