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PRESIDENT
RAKIM BROOKS

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PAULETTE MEYER

May 21, 2024

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Chairman
Senate Judiciary Committee

Dear Chairman Durbin:

On behalf of the Alliance for Justice, a national association representing more than 150 diverse organizations united in our commitment to justice, I write to express our support for the confirmation of Judge Michelle Williams Court to the to the United States District Court for the Central District of California.

A graduate of the Pomona College and Loyola Law School, Court began her legal career as an associate at Gilbert, Kelly, Crowley & Jennett. As an associate attorney, Court represented defendants in automobile accident cases where the defendant's insurance carrier suspected fraud. She then took on a project attorney role with the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California, handling cases involving Native American rights and workplace disputes. From 1995 to 1999, Judge Court transitioned to Litt & Marquez, where she handled a wide range of responsibilities. She was deeply involved in litigation, settlements, trials, and appeals, with a particular focus on multi-plaintiff and class action employment and housing cases. From 1999 to 2000, Judge Court served as a Community Builder Fellow and Civil Rights Specialist at the United States Department of Housing & Urban Development, a prestigious role awarded to only six fellows nationwide. As part of the HUD/Harvard University Kennedy School of Government Community Builder Fellowship, she contributed to Fair Housing Act policy and enforcement initiatives, protecting individuals' housing rights and supporting community development efforts.

From 2000 to 2002, Judge Court advanced her career as a senior associate at Milberg Weiss Bershad Hynes & Lerach. There, she focused on pretrial litigation in consumer and civil rights class actions, tackling issues such as insurance discrimination, employment discrimination, and mortgage lending fraud. Court then spent the next 10 years at Bet Tzedek Legal Services, a top-tier organization and nonprofit law firm specializing in poverty law. Starting as Deputy Director of Litigation and rising to Director of Litigation, interim CEO, and eventually Vice President and General Counsel, Judge Court managed a team of over 30 staff attorneys and advocates. She directed legal operations, supervised human resources and pro bono departments and collaborated closely with the President/CEO to implement the organization's strategic vision.

Since February 2012, Judge Court has served on the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles. As of December 2022, she is the Supervising Judge of the Civil Division, overseeing the management and administration of about 135 judges and commissioners. Her leadership in this role highlights her unwavering commitment to judicial excellence and her esteemed reputation within the California legal community.

Throughout her legal career, Court has demonstrated an immeasurable commitment to mentoring aspiring legal professionals through moot court programs and competitions. She partnered with Loyola Law School to oversee trials for at-risk high school students and participated in mock trials with the Los Angeles Superior Court and the Constitutional Rights Foundation. Recently, she served as a judge for the prestigious Greene Broillet & Wheeler National Civil Trial Competition, underscoring her commitment to fostering excellence in litigation skills among law students. Additionally, Court actively participates in mentoring initiatives, mock trial programs, and community outreach efforts such as Teen Court and the Power Lunch Program, which introduces high school students to legal careers. She also contributes to the Los Angeles County Bar Association's Dialogues on Freedom, highlighting her dedication to legal education and community service.

Given her remarkable qualifications, we strongly encourage your office to ensure the Senate confirms Judge Michelle Williams Court to the United States District Court for the Central District of California as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rakim H.D. Brooks".

Rakim Brooks
President, Alliance for Justice