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November 2, 2023

BY EMAIL

Honorable Richard J. Durbin, Chair
United States Senate
Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirkson Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Lindsey O. Graham, Ranking Member
United States Senate
Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirkson Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: *Nomination of John D. Russell to the United States District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma*

Dear Chair Durbin and Ranking Member Graham:

I write to offer my unqualified support for the nomination of John D. Russell as United States District Judge for the Northern District of Oklahoma.

Mr. Russell and I have been professionally and socially associated in various respects since the 1990s. Having closely observed Mr. Russell for almost three decades, I know him to be highly qualified for the position you consider here. For over fifteen years we practiced law in the same firm and worked closely together on contested and complex cases in Federal Court, before regulatory commissions and in private arbitration. During that time, we routinely collaborated and consulted with each other on technical and difficult legal questions, on matters of professional ethics, and on litigation analysis and strategy. In my experience over almost fifty years of actively practicing law, I cannot think of any lawyer more qualified to become a member of the Federal judiciary.

Mr. Russell is a skilled lawyer. He is analytical, evaluative, and incisive in his approach. He gleans the core issues from complex cases. His command of federal procedure made him an especially valued resource for me during our professional association and I have personally observed his superior ability to evaluate and master complex and technical legal questions. In this regard, his preparation is meticulous and his work ethic admirable.

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Mr. Russell demonstrates remarkable temperament in his practice. He maintains a calm but firm demeanor with opposing counsel during moments of conflict, while always adhering to his professional obligation of diligent representation of his clients. He is collegial and respectful to other lawyers, whether or not they are opposed to his client's interests. When conflict and controversy emerge – as they always do in the practice – he is often the calmest and most engaged person in the room. He relates very well to others within the legal community with his legal competence and his interpersonal skills. He is an articulate, frank, and direct communicator.

During our fifteen-year professional association, I observed that Mr. Russell consistently exercised superior judgment. He was thoughtful and deliberate in developing and implementing litigation and settlement strategies to achieve sound and beneficial case resolutions. His intelligent approach to dispute resolution was very effective.

Mr. Russell is foremost a person of the highest character and integrity. His law partners and his legal colleagues throughout Oklahoma respect him not only for his professionalism and his legal skill, but also for the example he publicly sets for integrity, character, and composure. His ethics are beyond question. His reputation in the community is rock solid.

I have no doubt whatsoever that as a District Judge, Mr. Russell would know the law, follow the law, and apply the law thoughtfully and wisely. Accordingly, I am pleased enthusiastically to endorse his nomination and I highly recommend his prompt confirmation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Curtis M. Long", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Curtis M. Long

CML:jms