



Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law
Office of the Dean

Katharine T. Schaffzin

1 N. Front Street
Memphis, Tennessee 38103 - 2189
Office: 901.678.1623
www.memphis.edu

Via Electronic Submission

April 5, 2024

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Chairman, Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Ranking Member, Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
211 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Marsha Blackburn
United States Senate
357 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Bill Hagerty
United States Senate
251 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

***Re: Support for Nomination of United States Attorney Kevin Ritz
to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit***

Dear Chairman Durbin, Ranking Member Graham, and Senators Blackburn and Hagerty,

On behalf of the University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law, I am pleased to write this letter of support for President Biden's nomination of United States Attorney Kevin Ritz for appointment to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. Attorney Ritz is a well-respected, humble leader in the Memphis legal community. As a career federal prosecutor in the appellate division, there are few native Tennesseans with the familiarity and Sixth Circuit expertise of Attorney Ritz. He is a lifelong Memphian and the product of Memphis Shelby County Schools who brings with him a deep understanding of the needs of the communities the court serves. Attorney Ritz is carefully considerate and thoughtful in all endeavors; his wisdom and intelligence would be an asset to the court. As demonstrated through his professional and personal record, he is authentic in his desire to serve our community and would do so for the citizens within the jurisdiction of the Sixth Circuit with distinction.

*Letter from Dean Schaffzin to Chairman Durbin, Ranking Member Graham, and
Senators Blackburn and Hagerty*

April 5, 2024

Page 2

Throughout his professional career, Attorney Ritz has dedicated his practice to the Office of the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Tennessee. He has focused his practice on appellate work before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit for thirteen of his eighteen years with that office. Prior to serving as a federal prosecutor, Attorney Ritz clerked for the Honorable Julia Gibbons of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. He is an expert on the law and functions of the Sixth Circuit and would serve as an excellent and impartial judge on that court.

Attorney Ritz is extremely intelligent and well-educated, as demonstrated by his academic achievements at two of the nation's finest universities. Although the University of Memphis cannot claim Attorney Ritz as a graduate, as we do with U.S. Congressmen Steve Cohen and David Kustoff and Sixth Circuit Judges Andre Mathis and Bernice Donald (retired), he has been actively involved in the success of our law students throughout his career. Attorney Ritz served as an adjunct faculty member for eight years, teaching foundational research, writing, and advocacy skills in our 1L Legal Methods course. He mentors to and models professionalism for Memphis Law students through externship placements in his office and his involvement in the Leo Bearman, Sr. American Inn of Court, the Tennessee Bar Association, the Memphis Bar Association, and the Federal Bar Association. It is through his active involvement in the legal community and with Memphis Law students that I have become familiar with Attorney Ritz. He is fully invested in building a strong and ethical bar in Shelby County and throughout the state.

I joined the Memphis legal community shortly after Attorney Ritz began teaching at Memphis Law and, in that time, he has consistently demonstrated a balanced and measured approach to complicated issues. He is friendly and approachable to both lifelong acquaintances and newcomers alike. Parties seeking redress before him would welcome his fair-minded approach to resolving complex disputes.

For these reasons, I am honored to provide this letter of support for the nomination of Kevin Ritz to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. He is a brilliant attorney and would serve as an excellent jurist. I commend President Biden on his selection.

Sincerely,



Katharine T. Schaffzin
Dean & Professor of Law