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The Honorable Dick Durbin
Sent via email: Sarah_Bauer@judiciary-dem.senate.gov

Dear Senator Durbin,

I am delighted to learn that Justice Julia Lipez, one of the most talented, intelligent, fair-minded, ethical, and diligent judges in the State of Maine, has been appointed to the Federal First Circuit Court of Appeals. I often appear before Justice Lipez and I am always struck by the genuine care that she shows to everyone in the courtroom. I questioned the prosecutors in my office and everyone feels the same way: with Justice Lipez we know that justice will prevail.

Justice Lipez is fair to all parties. Her analysis is always based on facts, law, and sound legal reasoning. She is never biased toward one side or the other. She listens to every argument and reads every written word. For example, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, we have bail hearings for everyone who was arrested in the last 48 hours. Sometimes this can mean 20 to 30 hearings back to back starting at 1 pm for paperwork that is submitted at 11 a.m. No matter how long the list, Justice Lipez is always familiar with the facts of every case having read everything that we submitted only two hours earlier. The State never has to remind her of a fact in a probable cause affidavit because she already knows all the information. Impressive.

Justice Lipez is particularly concerned about victims of domestic violence. She shows this concern by listening deeply to the words of victims. I have personally witnessed Justice Lipez say that she will not agree to a State negotiated domestic violence plea due to the sentence being too light. But after the State explained why the victim wanted the negotiated plea, and the difficulties the State would face at trial, Justice Lipez changed

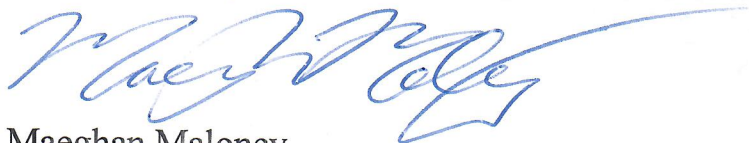
her mind and agreed to the victim's request. Justice Lipez only agreed after she was convinced that the victim was not being manipulated, the DV relationship was over, and the victim would be irreparably harmed at trial. Justice Lipez compromised her own strong belief in high sentences for domestic violence offenders for the good of a victim and I know the victim will be forever grateful. Confidentiality prevents me from giving details, but I can say that Justice Lipez saved the victim's life that day.

On another day, Justice Lipez saved the life of a different victim through an opposite approach. In *State of Maine v. John O'Connor*, Mr. O'Connor was found guilty after a jury trial of one count of domestic violence criminal threatening, Class C. The maximum sentence on a Class C crime is 5 years. Justice Lipez sentenced Mr. O'Connor to 5 years. In her colloquy on the record, Justice Lipez highlighted Mr. O'Connor's history of violence and in particular his history of violence against women. She did not suspend a single day of the 5 year sentence—he will serve the entire 5 years. The victim in this case had previously been Mr. O'Connor's victim in past cases. I am grateful to Justice Lipez that the maximum 5 year sentence will give this victim the time she needs away from her abuser to heal. Justice Lipez saved this victim's life.

Leaving Justice Lipez's courtroom, I often hear remarks from the public such as "great judge" and "how well she listened." Justice Lipez holds defendants accountable and speaks to everyone with respect and dignity. Victims feel respected. Law enforcement feels respected. Defendants feel respected. That takes a special talent. I leave the courtroom of Justice Lipez feeling proud of Maine's criminal justice system.

I am overjoyed to give my highest, most enthusiastic recommendation to Justice Julia Lipez for the First Circuit Court of Appeals.

Thank you for your consideration and dedication to the State of Maine,



Maeghan Maloney
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