



EARL B. GILLIAM BAR
ASSOCIATION

November 18, 2024

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

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

**Re: Letter of Support for Confirmation of Magistrate Judge Benjamin J. Cheeks
to the United States District Court for the Southern District of California**

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Graham,

On behalf of the Earl B. Gilliam Bar Association, I offer this letter to express our strong unwavering support of President Biden's nomination of Magistrate Judge Benjamin J. Cheeks to the United States District Court for the Southern District of California. The Earl B. Gilliam Bar Association is an organization established in 1976 whose mission is to advance the political, economic, social, legislative, and legal interests of the Black community in San Diego County.

Judge Cheeks' career spans over several decades serving the citizens of our community not only in the public sector as Assistant Deputy District Attorney in New York County, but also in the private sector as principal criminal defense attorney at the Law Offices of Benjamin J. Cheeks, APC. While in private practice, Judge Cheeks, was an adjunct professor at Thomas Jefferson School of Law and at California Western School of Law – this spanned over nine years. Judge Cheeks' dedication to serving multiple bar



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associations reflects his character, passion for the community, and engagement with current affairs.

In 2022, the Southern District Court appointed him to serve as a Lawyer Representative for the District of Southern California. He also served as a member of the District Court's Standing Committee on Discipline for the Southern District of California. He published over 20 articles and Op-Eds on several subjects in various legal publications.

On March 28, 2024, the District Judges of the U.S. District Court of Southern California selected Judge Cheeks to serve as Magistrate Judge. Judge Cheeks is the first African American Magistrate judge to serve in the Southern District since the retirement of Magistrate Judge William McCurine in 2014. Judge Cheeks has the experience, work ethic, and commitment to the legal community to be a strong District Court Judge.

On behalf of the Earl B. Gilliam Bar Association, we support Judge Benjamin J. Cheeks and urge his confirmation to the United States District Court of California.

Sincerely,

Loan T. Shillinger

President,
Earl B. Gilliam Bar Association