

October 24, 2023

The Honorable Richard Durban
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Graham:

We write to express our strong support for the nomination of Sarah French Russell to the United States District Court for the District of Connecticut.

We have been privileged to serve as federal prosecutors within the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Connecticut. Many of us have held leadership positions in the Department of Justice ("DOJ"), and our collective experience covers the breadth of DOJ's law enforcement responsibilities. We remain deeply committed to the principles that sustain DOJ's work: fidelity to the rule of law, independence, fairness to all litigants and the cause of justice. The signatories to this letter, collectively, have more than 150 years of prosecutorial experience. During our DOJ careers and beyond, we have had the opportunity to litigate and interact with Attorney Russell as colleagues, adversaries, members of committees, and Bar organizations. We know Attorney Russell cherishes the rule of law and is dedicated to its even-handed application. We also know she will work hard to distinguish herself and to bring further distinction to our federal bench in Connecticut.

Attorney Russell's record is stellar: she graduated *magna cum laude* from Yale College, where, among other things, she captained Yale's Division I Women's Hockey Team; she graduated from Yale Law School where she was Notes Editor of *The Yale Law Journal*; she clerked for Judge Michael Mukasey on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York; and, for Judge Chester Straub on the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. After her clerkships, Attorney Russell entered public service as an Assistant Federal Defender with the Office of the Federal Defender for the District of Connecticut. In that role, Attorney Russell represented indigent individuals who were charged with federal crimes.

As a young lawyer, Attorney Russell quickly distinguished herself in Connecticut's legal community as thoughtful, thoroughly prepared, highly skilled, and a persuasive advocate, both in her oratory and in her writing. Equally importantly, Attorney Russell distinguished herself for her professionalism and collegiality.

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As an Assistant Federal Defender, Attorney Russell performed the essential work of securing the Constitution's protections for persons accused of and convicted of crimes. Those of us who prosecuted Attorney Russell's clients uniformly found her to be a fair and capable adversary. Always protective of her clients' interests, Attorney Russell also demonstrated a respect for the Government's prerogatives and an appreciation for the challenges faced by law enforcement. Attorney Russell's credibility with federal prosecutors, with the courts before whom she practiced, her meticulous organization, her practical approach to problem solving, and her dedication to justice resulted in many just dispositions for her clients.

Attorney Russell's transition to academia - teaching at both Yale Law School and Quinnipiac Law School - allowed her to use her considerable experience and skills in practical ways to help train future generations of lawyers. Through her teaching and clinical courses she has been unflinching in addressing complicated social, societal, and important crime enforcement issues. Attorney Russell brings rigor, honesty, credibility and, most of all, respect for the rule of law to these important endeavors.

In sum, as experienced former federal prosecutors, we strongly recommend your favorable consideration of Sarah French Russell's nomination to the United States District Court for the District of Connecticut. She is a highly qualified and competent attorney and academic, who will serve our country and our federal courts with great distinction and honor.

Respectfully submitted,

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Former Commissioner of State Police
Former Superior Court Judge

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