



Federal Defenders of Eastern Washington and Idaho

306 East Chestnut Avenue Yakima, Washington 98901 P: 509.248.8920 F: 509.248.9118

Executive Director
Andrea K. George

Chief Deputy
Ben Hernandez

Managing Attorney
Spokane & North Idaho
Amy H. Rubin

Senior Litigator
John B. McEntire, IV

Chief Investigator
Gabe Caballero

April 12, 2024

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

RE: Support for The Honorable Rebecca Pennell's appointment to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Washington.

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee Members,

It is an honor and great privilege to write a letter of support endorsing Rebecca Pennell for the position of United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Washington. I have worked with Ms. Pennell when she served as a trial attorney for the Federal Defenders of Eastern Washington and Idaho while I served as a United States Probation Officer also for the Eastern District of Washington. As a probation officer, I contributed to the criminal justice process, ensuring public safety and fair administration of justice in our federal courts for 20 years. I retired as a probation officer in August of 2022. I now serve as a Social Worker/Mitigation Specialist for the Federal Defenders of Eastern Washington and Idaho.

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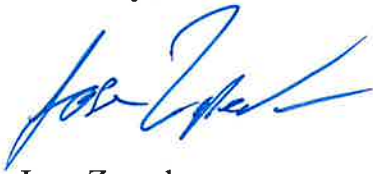
I had the privilege of working with Ms. Pennell for approximately 14 years until her appointment as a judge for the Washington Court of Appeals in Spokane, Washington in 2016. Throughout our collaboration, Ms. Pennell consistently demonstrated unwavering character, integrity, and a deep commitment to justice. Her legal expertise was exceptional and she impressed me with her unwavering dedication when representing indigent clients. Additionally, her extensive

knowledge of the Federal Criminal Codes exceeded the norm. Notably, from a probation officer's perspective, Ms. Pennell consistently advocated for the interests of her clients, all while upholding the highest level of respect for everyone involved within the court system.

In summary, Ms. Pennell's distinguished career as an appeals judge and her prior role as a federal public defender exemplify the very qualities we seek in a federal judge. Her unwavering commitment to public service and the well-being of our community renders her an exceptional nominee for the position of United States District Judge.

Thank you for considering my endorsement of Ms. Pennell. I am confident that she will serve with distinction as a Judge for of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Washington.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jose Zepeda", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jose Zepeda