

# Florence T. Nakakuni

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September 22, 2023

The Honorable Richard Durbin  
Chairman  
U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary  
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lindsey O. Graham  
Ranking Member  
U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary  
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Graham:

I am writing to express my strong support for the nomination of State of Hawaii Circuit Court Judge Shanlyn Park to the United States District Court for the District of Hawaii.

I have known Judge Park for approximately 28 years. Judge Park's personal integrity, character and humility along with her strong litigation background as a State Court Judge, an Assistant Public Defender and having been a partner in private practice in Honolulu, make her, in my opinion, a highly qualified jurist for the federal bench. I have known her from around 1995—I was an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the U.S. Attorney's Office here in Hawaii and Judge Park [then, Shanlyn Souza] was a law clerk to U.S. Magistrate Judge Francis Yamashita. After her one-year clerkship, she moved on the Federal Public Defender's Office where she served for almost 20 years. Over the years, I have had many cases with Judge Park. She represented her clients zealously and advocated on their behalf. She was a capable and collegial adversary. She was reasonable and conducted herself with integrity and professionalism—her word was her bond. She knew the law and followed the law. She earned the respect of the federal Judges, the defense bar and the U.S. Attorney's Office.


Judge Park graduated from the Sacred Hearts Academy and from Chaminade University in Honolulu, and then attended the William S. Richardson School of Law. During her third year in law school, she clerked for the Hawaii Civil Rights Commission. After rising through the ranks in the Office of the Federal Public Defender, she joined the McCorriston Miller Mukai MacKinnon law firm where she became a partner. After several years, she left the firm and joined the Gallagher Kane Amai & Reyes law firm. Thereafter, in 2021 she was appointed by Hawaii Governor David Ige to the First Circuit Court. Judge Park has an excellent reputation as

a State Circuit Court Judge. She is even-handed and has an accessible approach. I am now with the Prosecuting Attorney's Office and when she has disagreed with us, she has a reasoned decision and our prosecutors respect her decision. She has a reputation as being a fair judge who follows the law; she is not outcome-oriented. Her decisions are fair, consistent with statutory and case law, and understandable. From all accounts, she has appropriate judicial demeanor and temperament. She is respectful to parties, counsel, jurors and to everyone with whom she interacts.

Judge Park has no agenda; she gives both sides a "fair shake" because she believes in the rule of law. Judge Park will follow the law; she will thoughtfully but firmly and correctly interpret the law, according to precedent, and make a decision. I know she will be an effective judge because she is fair and reasonable, a clear and thoughtful communicator, is open to new or different ways of viewing an issue, and can disagree without being disagreeable.

As a former United States Attorney for the District of Hawaii, I strongly recommend your favorable consideration of Judge Park's nomination to the United States District Court for the District of Hawaii. It is without reservation that I support Judge Park's nomination and confirmation.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Florence T. Nakakuni