

The Honorable Richard 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

Dear Senator Durbin and Senator Graham,

I am pleased to recommend Judge Julia Kathleen Munley for for the position of United States District Judge for the Middle District of Pennsylvania. After many years as a successful practicing attorney, Judge Munley has served with distinction as a member of the Court of Common Pleas Pleas in Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania.

I have had the pleasure and privilege of knowing Judge Munley for more than twenty-five years, both in a personal and professional capacity.

Julia Munley is a highly respected community leader with an extraordinarily outgoing, vivacious personality, who has a kind word and a smile for everyone she encounters, regardless of their station in life. As a member of the Board of Directors and Past President of St. Francis of Assisi Kitchen in Scranton, she goes beyond the administrative and policy making functions of a board member, taking a direct and hands-on approach by regularly participating in serving hot meals to the less fortunate members of our community, who rely on the Kitchen for their only nutritious meal of the day.

She is a sincere, engaging and dynamic woman who is generous in her support of a myriad of charitable, cultural and educational entities in Northeastern Pennsylvania, as well as state and national organizations. She devotes time and energy, working hard for the success of every endeavor she undertakes

Judge Munley served several terms as a member of the Board of Directors of the Lackawanna Heritage Valley State and National Heritage Area (LHVA). LHVA is based in Scranton, and it encompasses the watershed of the Lackawanna River in Lackawanna, Susquehanna, Wayne and Luzerne counties. It supports and coordinates a diverse array of projects that preserve, promote, interpret and enhance the historic, cultural and natural resources of Northeastern Pennsylvania. I served as Executive Director of LHVA from 2004 until my retirement in 2017, during which time Julia served as Chair of the Board for several years.

Judge Munley oversaw a host of projects during her tenure as Board Chair. Notable among them was the planning and development of the Lackawanna River Heritage Trail system along forty miles of the Lackawanna River. In order to acquire funding and to facilitate construction of the trail, it was necessary to acquire property rights to the proposed footprint along the river. Much of the designated footprint was on abandoned rail property, thus requiring complicated title searches among multiple parties.

Judge Munley's legal knowledge and expertise were critical to the process of acquiring rights of way in order to build the trail. She was able to understand, articulate, and elucidate viewpoints during discussions and negotiations with stakeholders, always exhibiting respect and empathy for competing interests. She was adept at resolving differences, proposing mutually beneficial compromises and solutions to accomplish the desired results for all parties

I am pleased to report that today, several years later, most of the Lackawanna River Heritage Trail has been completed, and it is a major health, wellness and recreational asset, generating millions of dollars to the local economy annually.

For the past several decades, Judge Munley has been a mentor to scores of young people, offering professional support, and employment assistance, not only to aspiring lawyers, but also for others in need of guidance and encouragement to attain their personal goals. She is a role model for her colleagues to do the same, advocating on the topic to women's groups and other organizations.

Judge Munley comes naturally to the role of mentorship, having been mentored herself by her accomplished and loving parents. Her late father, Judge James M. Munley, was a distinguished and widely respected jurist for the Middle District of Pennsylvania. Her mother, Kathleen P Munley, Ph.D., is a brilliant historian and a college professor. Judge Julia Munley was nurtured to help others, as well as to pursue excellence and lifelong learning.

Judge Julia Kathleen Munley is open minded, courteous, compassionate, perceptive, and intellectually curious, with unquestioned integrity and high ethical standards. As a Judge, she is noted for fairness, firmness and impartiality, always ruling with strict adherence to the law. She will make an excellent Judge for the Middle District of Pennsylvania.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Very truly yours,

Natalie Gelb