



June 14, 2024

The Honorable Thom Tillis, United States Senator
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Ted Budd, United States Senator
304 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Support for Ryan Park for position on the Fourth Circuit

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Dear Senators Tillis and Budd:

I understand that Ryan Park is being considered to fill a seat on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. I fully support Ryan's nomination.

I've spent nearly my entire career focused on appellate practice since I graduated several decades ago from Duke University School of Law. I clerked for judges on the D.C. Circuit (a Republican nominee) and the Fourth Circuit (a Democratic nominee). I then worked for Ted Olson in the appellate group at Gibson Dunn & Crutcher in Washington, D.C., before moving back to North Carolina, where I joined Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice in Raleigh, becoming co-chair of the firm's appellate group.

In 2009 I accepted an offer from Dean David Levi to join Duke Law's faculty full-time. For 13 years I ran Duke's appellate programs, including teaching Appellate Practice—which had me working with a number of federal appellate judges—and serving as Director of Duke's Appellate Litigation Clinic. For most of my tenure at Duke, I served on the clerkship committee. I advised and mentored students across the ideological spectrum, including a significant number of Federalist Society members, many of whom I helped get clerkships and continue to mentor. I left Duke in mid-2022 to return to private practice. Ryan and two of my former students took over the Appellate Practice course I had taught for over a decade.

I met Ryan years earlier when I was a professor. My view of Ryan isn't based on party affiliation. I'm registered as an unaffiliated voter. Rather, my assessment is based on my personal and professional interactions with him, and my knowledge of his work product (briefs and oral argument), including in cases in which I was a consultant or a lawyer on the other side.

Ryan is obviously exceedingly bright and talented. His outstanding credentials speak for themselves. But what stood out to me when I first interacted with him one-on-one (at a Christmas party years ago at the home of a conservative Duke colleague), and continues to stand out, is his thoughtfulness, friendliness, energy, and humility. Despite his extraordinary credentials and big brain, he is a "regular" guy—no whiff of elitism, no credential signaling.



On multiple occasions, Ryan accepted my invitation to speak to my third-year students about his career. I often emphasized to students that they should strive for a balance that centers faith, family, and friendships. Ryan talked to my students about his career trajectory and his work-life balance as a husband and father. He's a family man, devoted to his wife and their children. Students were impressed by his modesty, his affability, and his story.

In addition to my interactions with Ryan at Duke, he and I have served for years on the Appellate Rules Committee of the N.C. State Bar Association, where we have also interacted. We've had a number of friendly, personal conversations over the years. Never—not once—have I heard Ryan discuss politics or his views on political matters. From those conversations, I'd have no idea of his political leanings. He has struck me as neither partisan nor an ideologue. Insofar as he has been counsel in controversial cases, he has—like most of us lawyers—done so as an advocate for the clients he has represented, consistent with his fiduciary duties.

I've read briefs he's prepared and seen him argue in court. He's a talented lawyer who is neither aggressive nor self-centered. As a lawyer he's even-keeled, as he is when not lawyering.

I practice before the Fourth Circuit. I represent and will continue to represent, among others, business organizations accused of wrongdoing in civil cases and entities aligned with conservative and libertarian causes. I'm confident they and all other parties will get fair treatment from Ryan if he is a judge. I have no reason to believe he'd transform into an ideological jurist or judicial activist. I predict he'll approach each case with an open mind, thoughtfully and carefully resolving the issues presented by the parties based on the law as it is—guided by legal text, restrained by applicable standards of review, and faithful to Supreme Court precedent.

Very truly yours,

Sean Andrussier

Cc: Phillip A. Brest, Esq.