



Superior Court of California
County of Fresno

FROM THE CHAMBERS OF
JAMES A. KELLEY, JR.
Judge of the Superior Court

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May 12, 2023

The Honorable Richard Durbin, Chair
The Honorable Lindsey Graham, Ranking Member
United States Senate Committee of the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Nomination of Judge Ana de Alba to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals

Dear Senator Durbin, Senator Graham and Committee Members:

Please accept my unconditional recommendation of Judge Ana de Alba for the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. I have known Judge de Alba for over 15 years, as an attorney, as a colleague on the California Superior Court bench, and now as a U.S. District Judge. I cannot imagine a better choice for the position. Judge de Alba is smart, hard-working, fair, and one of the most genuine people I have ever met.

As an attorney, Ana de Alba quickly rose through the ranks at her law firm, becoming the youngest managing partner in the firm's history. When she was appointed to the California Superior Court, she hit the ground running. She was given a busy criminal assignment, after coming from a civil law background, and she worked tirelessly to learn the ins and outs of California criminal law in short order. It was clear from the start that she was "a natural" on the bench. So it was no surprise when she was appointed by President Biden to the District Court.

Judge de Alba, comes from humble beginnings, the child of farm laborers, who were determined to have their children succeed. Nothing has ever been handed to her. She is the embodiment of the American Dream, the notion that anyone can achieve great things with hard work and perseverance. Yet, strangely, I do not believe that she has defied expectations. Anyone who has watched the evolution of this exceptional woman, knew that she was destined for great things. I met her when she was still in her twenties and she struck me as bright, energetic, capable and mature beyond her years.

As a colleague on the Superior Court bench, it was obvious that Judge de Alba had found her calling. All judges are expected to know the law, to be able to manage a heavy caseload, and make decisions quickly--which she did very well. But what sets

Hon. Richard Durbin, Hon. Lindsey Graham, Committee Members

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Judge de Alba apart is her humility and her humanity. Judge de Alba is completely without pretense and one of the most compassionate people I know. Most people who have enjoyed a meteoric rise in their chosen field, begin to think of themselves as something special, but Judge de Alba who has enjoyed more success than most, remains humble and grounded.

I could go on about how Judge de Alba goes out of her way to nurture young attorneys, how she is involved in her community, all while being a great mother to her young daughter, but I am sure you have heard that from others. I would like to close by saying that in my six-plus decades on this earth, Ana de Alba is one of the most impressive people that I have had the pleasure to know. She is an outstanding candidate for the Court of Appeals.

Very truly yours,



James A. Kelley, Jr.

JAK:rmf