

June 12, 2024

The Honorable Richard Durbin, Chair
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Grassley, Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
152 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Nomination of Mary Kay Lanthier to the U.S. District Court
for the District of Vermont

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

The undersigned Vermont Fellows of the American College of Trial Lawyers strongly support the nomination of Mary Kay Lanthier to serve on the United States District Court for the District of Vermont.

Mary Kay is an exceptional trial lawyer. Her competency, ethics, and collegiality were thoroughly investigated by both the State Committee and the Board of the American College of Trial Lawyers before she was elected a Fellow in 2018, and her credentials were found to be outstanding. She has dedicated most of her career to serving as a Vermont Public Defender, forsaking a lucrative position in private practice in order to provide indigent Vermonters with the highest quality and ethical legal representation. Mary Kay's practice has been the embodiment of the Supreme Court's ruling in *Gideon v. Wainwright*, 372 U.S. 335, 344 (1963) where Justice Black wrote for the Court that the "noble ideal" in our Constitution that "every defendant stands equal before the law . . . cannot be realized if the poor man charged with crime has to face his accusers without a lawyer to assist him."

We collectively have tried many hundreds of jury and bench trials in both the Vermont State and Federal District Courts. Vermont has been very fortunate in that we have a history of extremely competent and fair Federal District Judges. Some, such as Judges Crawford and Reiss, were state judges before moving to the federal bench. Others, such as Judge Sessions, had not been a judge before being appointed to the Federal District Court. In fact, like Mary Kay, Judge Sessions had experience as a public defender and was not a civil litigator, but he quickly became an outstanding district judge. All of them share certain traits: they work hard, they

treat litigants and counsel fairly and with respect, and they continually seek to improve. We are confident that Mary Kay will embrace and maintain this tradition of judicial excellence and that she will roll her sleeves up and approach her judicial responsibilities with the same dedication and commitment that she has demonstrated during her over quarter century of legal practice.

In closing, we express our sincere hope that this Committee will evaluate Mary Kay on her merits and for the good of Vermont's federal judiciary. She is a native Vermonter who cares deeply about her state, her country, and the rule of law. She will make you, and us, proud as Vermont's newest Federal District Judge.

Thank you.

Respectfully,



Michael L. Desautels
Chair, Vermont State Committee
Fellow, American College of Trial Lawyers



Ritchie E. Berger
Former Regent and Past Chair Vermont State Committee
Fellow, American College of Trial Lawyers

Vermont Fellows of the American College of Trial Lawyers:

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