



July 3, 2024

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Chairman
United States Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Ranking Member
United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

VIA EMAIL

Re: Letter of Support for The Honorable Noël Wise, Nominee for the United States District Court for the Northern District of California

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley,

Women Lawyers of Alameda County (“WLAC”) writes to express our enthusiastic support for the nomination of The Honorable Noël Wise to serve as a judge on the United States District Court for the Northern District of California.

Judge Wise is an experienced, capable, thoughtful, deliberate, and impartial arbiter of justice. She will adjudicate matters with the utmost fairness and adherence to the law.

WLAC is a minority bar association founded in 1980. Our mission is to promote the interests of women, including women lawyers, women judges, and women law students and in this regard, to encourage discussion of problems faced by women in the profession and develop solutions; provide a forum for social contact and professional networking; encourage professionalism, mutual respect and courtesy towards and among women in the legal profession; and further equal opportunity for all women. In pursuit of our mission, WLAC works closely with members of the bench in Alameda and Contra Costa counties to promote excellence on the bench. We host the legal community throughout the year to honor women judges in these counties who demonstrate excellence and leadership in the profession.

WLAC endorses judicial candidates who have demonstrated a commitment to supporting the advancement of women in the legal profession. Judge Wise has provided invaluable insight and guidance since she began serving as a judicial liaison to our organization several years ago.

Judge Wise is creative, involved, and caring. She is committed to the sponsorship and advancement of women and underserved communities. She devotes her time, energy, and considerable skill set to providing our organization with advice and guidance that demonstrably contributes to the mission of our organization. We have great respect for the work she has done to promote equity and diversity on the bench and to improve the responsiveness of the judicial system to the needs of the community.

This year, we were honored to nominate her for California Women Lawyers' Rose Bird Award and celebrate her receipt of the prize, recognizing her excellence as a jurist, longstanding public service, and inspiration to women lawyers.

Judge Wise's commitment to public service and dedication to supporting a diverse California bench and bar extend far beyond her role as a WLAC judicial liaison. Her work to promote equity and diversity on the bench and improve the judicial system's responsiveness to community needs is reflected in her receiving the 2022 Alba Witkin Humanitarian Award. In 2022, former California Supreme Court Chief Justice Cantil-Sakauye appointed Judge Wise to chair the Judicial Council of California's Judicial Branch Access, Ethics, and Fairness Committee.

Judge Wise also makes time to invest in the future of the bar, volunteering as a judge for various high school and law school trial, moot court, and mediation competitions, lecturing at Berkeley School of Law, and regularly participating in the "Judges in the Classroom" program to promote civics education to Bay Area youth. Outside the legal profession, Judge Wise is a pillar of her community, serving on the boards of both the Alameda Food Bank and Alameda Girls Inc.

Her publications also reflect her commitment to civil rights issues. On November 12, 2021, The Daily Journal published an Op-Ed article by Judge Wise titled, "Think Outside the Prison." In that article, Judge Wise shed light on the history that led to the elimination of nearly all in-patient mental health facilities in the United States. Further, she addressed how the lack of those facilities and the unavailability of in-patient drug treatment options caused a significant increase in homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic.

With over ten years on the bench, Judge Wise has established herself as a highly intelligent jurist with an unparalleled work ethic. Judge Wise was appointed to the Alameda County Superior Court in 2014 and quickly developed a reputation for her patient temperament and committed work ethic among both judges and individuals appearing in her court. From 2021 to 2022, Judge Wise sat in a *pro tem* assignment for the Second District Court of Appeal, Division 7, engaging in 73 appeals and more than 100 writs, including a powerful dissent.

Further demonstrating her consummate work ethic, in 2022, Judge Wise also contributed to a statewide panel that developed the curriculum for the Qualifying Ethics (QE-8) course for all bench officers. She has served as faculty at judicial college and taught at the New Judge Orientation.

Additionally, Judge Wise brings much needed diversity to the federal bench. Judge Wise's elevation offers a candidate with gender and socio-economic diversity. She brings life experience that is not common among federal judicial officers and would add a much-needed perspective to the federal bench. Her appointment would align with the values expressed by our President Biden: a broad diversity of background, experience, and perspective. At the same time, Judge Wise is completely committed to fair and equal application of the law.

We strongly recommend Judge Wise and very much hope to see her elevation to the federal bench in the near term.

Sincerely,

Women Lawyers of Alameda County
Board of Directors

Sonya Z. Mehta, President
Erica Summan, Vice President
Nan McGarry, Treasurer
Jacqueline Khong, Secretary
Jean Hyams, Scholarship Chair
Angelina Austin, Kazan Scholarship Chair
Abby Putzulu, Membership Chair
Mariah Weaver, Communications Chair
Elizabeth Schwartz
Lee Maranto
Maggie Calonge
Andria Eguia
Jacqueline Mejía-Cuéllar, Student Representative