

June 17, 2021

**Senator Dick Durbin**

United States Senate  
711 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**Senator Chuck Grassley**

United States Senate  
711 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

As Presidents of the First Circuit Chapters<sup>1</sup> (Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Puerto Rico), we have had the opportunity to meet the Honorable Gustavo A. Gelpí, Chief Judge of the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico.

The Federal Bar Association (FBA) is a tax-exempt 501(c)(6) organization founded in 1920. Its purpose is to serve as the national representative of the Federal legal profession; promote the sound administration of justice; enhance the professional growth and development of members of the Federal legal profession; promote high standards of professional competence and ethical conduct in the Federal legal profession; promote the welfare of attorneys and judges employed by the Government of the United States; provide quality education programs to the Federal legal profession and the public; keep members informed of developments in their respective fields of interest; and, promote diversity throughout the legal profession and the Federal Bar Association.

The FBA supports full and equal access to and participation by all individuals in the Association, the legal profession, and the justice system regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, national origin, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or any other unique attribute. The FBA recognizes that achieving diversity in the legal profession requires the Association's continued effort and commitment. The FBA is committed to diversity throughout the Association.

Today we jointly write, in our personal capacities, supporting President Biden's nomination of the Honorable. Gustavo A. Gelpí, Chief Judge of the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico.

Chief Judge Gelpí's illustrious career in public service spans three decades. He commenced as a law clerk to U.S. District Judge Juan M. Perez Gimenez. He then served as Assistant Public Defender. He represented clients before both the U.S. District Court for the District of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit and served a detail as Special Counsel to the United States Sentencing Commission. Chief Judge Gelpí next was appointed Solicitor General of Puerto Rico. He further enriched his appellate experience, representing the government before federal and state courts of appeal, including the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit. Following a brief period in private practice, he was appointed to serve as a United States Magistrate

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<sup>1</sup> The chapter presidents' endorsement does not necessarily reflect the chapter's endorsement. The chapter presidents are endorsing the nomination in their personal capacity.

Judge in the District of Puerto Rico. Five years later, he was nominated by President Bush. The Senate unanimously confirmed him to a position as United States District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico, wherein since 2018, he has served as its Chief Judge.

During his tenure on the federal bench, Chief Judge Gelpí has always managed a voluminous and diverse criminal and civil docket, characteristic in the District of Puerto Rico. As Chief Judge, he has maintained the same intense caseload while at the same time excellently managed the Court before and throughout the Covid 19 pandemic, including the continued dispensing of justice. In addition, Chief Judge Gelpí also presides over the Nation's most comprehensive police reform consent decree between the U.S. Department of Justice and Puerto Rico Police Bureau. His tireless dedication to enforcing the same has resulted in implementing constitutional police practices and officer accountability in Puerto Rico.

Chief Judge Gelpi's accomplishments are not limited to the District of Puerto Rico. The Chief Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit has over the years invited Chief Judge Gelpí to sit by designation on said Court, wherein he has authored several appellate opinions. Chief Justice John Roberts also appointed him to serve on the Judicial Conference Committee on Audits and Accountability. He continues to serve as a Judicial Conference member, representing the five judicial districts within the First Circuit.

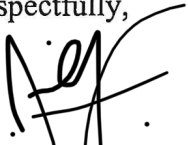
Chief Judge Gelpí is also an academic and published author. Over the years, he has taught one-week Intercession seminars about federal criminal practice, judicial writing, and the history of U.S. territories at law schools in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Puerto Rico, and Hawaii.

As a member and officer of the FBA for over thirty years, Chief Judge Gelpí notably served as its national president from 2013 to 2014. His term marked the first occasion in the one-hundred-year history of the organization in which a federal judge served as its president and the second such time for a Hispanic. Given that his presidency coincided with the fiftieth anniversary of the Civil Rights and Criminal Justice Acts, Chief Judge made it a priority that each FBA Chapter across the Nation hold a public event to commemorate the same and educate the bar and public. This goal was achieved, and Chief Judge Gelpí personally participated in several of these activities.

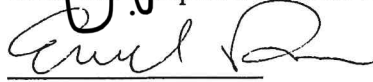
Over the years as an FBA national officer Chief Judge Gelpí was instrumental in strengthening the existing chapters in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Puerto Rico. During his year as FBA President, he prioritized establishing chapters in the remaining First Circuit jurisdictions of Maine and New Hampshire, at the time part of the very few districts without a chapter. Today, lawyers and judges within the First Circuit and elsewhere enjoy enhanced professional and educational opportunities within the FBA.

Chief Judge Gelpí is a genuine, authentic, and proven public servant on and off the bench. He is recognized at the Puerto Rico, First Circuit, and national levels as a fair, honest, respectful, and impartial judge. He embodies the ideal candidate's requirements to serve on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit: a top-caliber judicial acumen and temperament and an unquestionable and proven record of equal access to justice to all who come before him.

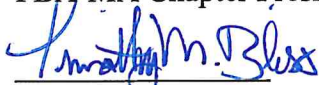
Respectfully,



Joseph G. Feldstein  
FBA-PR Chapter President in his Personal Capacity



Erika Reis  
FBA-MA Chapter President in her Personal Capacity



Timothy M. Bliss  
FBA-RI Chapter President in his Personal Capacity