

April 16, 2021

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Chair

The Honorable Charles Grassley
Ranking Member

Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Nomination of Candace Jackson-Akiwumi to the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

We write in enthusiastic support of Candace Jackson-Akiwumi for confirmation to the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. Like Candace, we are former law clerks to the Honorable Roger L. Gregory, Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. Many of us know Candace personally; all of us know her to be exceptional—a rare combination of intellect and judgment, with a temperament that is ideal for the post she has been nominated to occupy.

Professionally, Candace has distinguished herself through her intelligence and accomplishments. She is a seasoned litigator and a dedicated public servant, having worked for ten years as a federal defender. She has clerked for two federal judges, Judge Gregory and the Honorable David H. Coar of the Northern District of Illinois, one of the districts in the circuit she has been nominated to serve. And she is a distinguished graduate of Princeton University and Yale Law School. She has excelled at every stage of her career. This one will be no different.

Candace's intelligence and acumen are matched by her humanity and warmth. She is patient and kind, even when she disagrees with you. (We know from experience.) Candace will treat litigants and their disputes with attentiveness and respect, always remembering the people whose lives lie behind the legal briefs. She will be the sort of judge before whom any lawyer would be grateful to appear, and to whom any litigant could entrust their dispute with the confidence that it will be skillfully and fairly resolved. Candace thrives in the sort of environment required of a judge on a United States Court of Appeals. Firm in her analytical viewpoint, she has the ability to hear the voice of dissent and make a reasoned choice based on her understanding of the facts and the law, as well as consideration of the analysis of her colleagues. Candace will also be an inspiration to the attorneys who appear before her and a phenomenal mentor to the law clerks she hires to aid her.

In Judge Gregory's chambers, Candace was a trusted resource, both for the judge and for us, her colleagues. She saw both sides of every issue and was always ready to engage with any problem. Her considerable intellect elevated the level of analysis in chambers, and her skill as a collaborator brought out the best in the rest of us. She approached each case with passion, but never let that passion cloud her judgment.

Although we are all former clerks of Judge Gregory, we are diverse in our viewpoints, backgrounds, and careers. We are immigration attorneys, commercial litigators, law professors, directors at non-profits, counsel for government agencies, in-house lawyers, data scientists, and civil rights attorneys. We are former federal and state prosecutors, public defenders, JAG officers, labor lawyers, government trial lawyers, plaintiff and defense counsel, congressional staffers, and foreign relations officers. Despite these differences, we are united in our support for Candace.

Candace personifies excellence and integrity. If confirmed, she will represent those virtues and more. Like Judge Gregory, she will be an inspiration to others—a symbol of what can be achieved and the good that can be accomplished by a person with heart. We emphatically support her confirmation without reservation.

Sincerely,

Matthew Peller

Brian A. Pérez-Daple

– Law Clerks to Judge Gregory, 2006–2007 –



Juan A. Arteaga
2003–2004

Charles D. Austin
2013–2014

Portia R. Bamiduro
2003–2004

John Clopper
2001–2002

Chandra C. Davis
2004–2005

Maya M. Eckstein
2001

Sara A. Fairchild
2017–2018

Daniel Fryer
2019–2020

Shimica D. Gaskins
2007–2008

Daniel S. Harawa
2012–2013

Brandon Hasbrouck
2015–2016

Antonio Lavelle Ingram, II
2017–2018

Christopher M. Jackson
2011–2012

Cale Jaffe
2002–2003

Eamon P. Joyce
2003–2004

Chimnomnso N. Kalu
2014–2015

Cortelyou Kenney
2011–2012

Neel Lalchandani
2016–2017

LaDonne C. Lankster
2001–2002

Jon J. Lee
2008–2009

A. Anne Lloyd
2009–2010

Kapil Longani
2007–2008

Estalyn Smyke Marquis
2018–2019
Paul Meyer
2014–2015
Mercedes Montagnes
2010–2011
Tamra Tyree Moore
2002–2003
Zachary K. Nguyen
2019–2020
Erin K. Pitts
2005–2006
Hallie Jay Pope
2014–2015
Jessica L. Roberts
2007–2008
Kathryn Robinette
2015–2016
Deuel Ross
2010–2011

JP Schnapper-Casteras
2010–2011
Lillian V. Smith
2016–2017
Carson H. Sullivan
2001–2002
Dan Svirsky
2013–2014
Brian Tengel
2018–2019
Lartease Tiffith
2007–2008
Thais-Lyn Trayer
2014–2015
Melissa A. Valladares
2018–2019
Kristin L. Woeste
2005–2006