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July 6, 2022

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

I respectfully address you to express my full support and endorsement of Attorney María Antongiorgi Jordán to occupy the position of United States District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico; nomination which is presently under the consideration of the Judiciary Committee.

I have known Ms. Antongiorgi for over 25 years and consider her a dear friend. We also share the same profession since I am an attorney at law, though presently retired after

-serving 22 years at the Executive Office for Immigration Review as an Immigration Judge in Guaynabo, Puerto Rico. Thus, I have had the privilege of getting to know her closely, not only socially but professionally as well.

As a friend, Ms. Antongiorgi has demonstrated to be one of the most loyal friends one could ever aspire to have. Throughout the years I have also had the opportunity of meeting her extended family and have seen the respect, love, and Christian values they all share. Professionally, we have a similar background since she specialized in Labor Law and my field of expertise is in Immigration Law.

Throughout my legal career I worked for the federal government in different capacities. My first job opportunity with the federal government was in 1982 as a Federal Judicial Law Clerk. I also had the privilege of working for the Federal Public Defender's Office representing defendants criminally charged before the Federal District Court for the District of Puerto Rico for approximately 5 years. In 1991, I was hired as an attorney for Legacy INS (now DHS OPLA). In 1997, I was appointed to the position of Immigration Judge in Guaynabo, Puerto Rico, position from which I retired in 2019.

While holding the position of Immigration Judge I taught Immigration Law as an Adjunct Professor for two Law Schools in Puerto Rico, to wit, the University of Puerto Rico School of Law and the InterAmerican University School of Law. Ms. Antongiorgi's outstanding employment history, educational background (master's degree in labor law from Georgetown University) as well as her superb verbal skills, prompted me to invite her as a speaker *ad honorem*, on a regular basis, in order to address my students on the topic of Employment Visas, topic which she skillfully dominates. Semester after semester, she received outstanding evaluations from all students who attended her lectures. She was eager to share her knowledge and expertise as well as her experiences as an attorney, fact that inspired and encouraged many law students. I know first-hand, that many contacted her after classes to seek information and assistance. She always remained available to serve and guide.

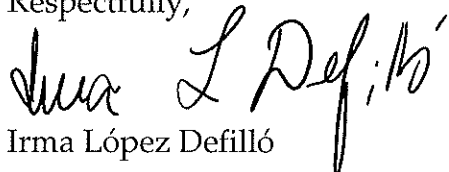
Ms. Antongiorgi is not only an outstanding teacher and lecturer, but for over 23 years, she excelled as well as a civil practitioner while working for a prestigious law firm, primarily in labor and employment matters. While working for this firm, she voluntarily devoted 10 years as a contributor to the District Court's Federal Bar Examination Committee, drafting ethics questions for the bi-annual administration of the bar exam. In

addition, from 2012 through 2018, she voluntarily joined the Criminal Justice Act Panel of Attorneys "CJA" to represent indigent defendants criminally charged before the Federal District Court in Puerto Rico. At the time, because of the high volume of drug multi-defendant cases, Panel Attorneys needed support from experienced litigators and Ms. Antongiorgi volunteered her services upon the Court's request. Regretfully, because of time constraints, I never had the opportunity to see her litigate cases before the State or Federal Court, but I came to know that court personnel, fellow judges, attorneys and opposing counsel would praise not only her knowledge, dedication, thoroughness, and demeanor but also commended, the respect with which she addressed all sides, including witnesses and Judges.

After having a brilliant legal career in the private sector and the opportunity to represent defendants before the U.S. District Court, in June 2018, she came to work for the Federal District Court in Puerto Rico as the Chief Deputy Clerk and eventually appointed Clerk of Court in September 2019, position she still holds. Having been a proud federal public servant for 37 years and considering myself a former member of the Court's family, I welcomed her decision to join the Federal District Court with great joy and enthusiasm. She came to the government to serve and continue to contribute with her knowledge and skills. She is an outstanding candidate, possess judicial temperament, is knowledgeable of the law, a hard worker and team player and above all, respects the rule of law, to which I have no doubt she will be committed to.

In sum, Ms. Antongiorgi aspires to be entrusted with the privilege of being appointed to serve as a U.S. District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico. If afforded said distinction, rest assured she will hold said position with dignity, respecting all sides, hearing and pondering arguments consciously and rendering decisions under the rule of law. More so, I remain confident she will make an extraordinary contribution to the District Court while continuing to uphold the Court's mission, public trust and confidence in the federal judiciary.

Respectfully,



Irma López Defilló

Immigration Judge, Retired