

**The Superior Court
of the
State of California**

CHAMBERS OF
RODERICK W. SHELTON
*JUDGE OF THE
SAN DIEGO SUPERIOR COURT*

SAN DIEGO
EASTERN DIVISION

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November 23, 2022

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Sent via email to Philip Brest
Office of Senator Dick Durbin
Phillip_Brest@judiciary-dem.senate.gov

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Sent via email to Brendan Chestnut
Office of Senator Chuck Grassley
Brendan_Chestnut@judiciary-rep.senate.gov

RE: Hon. James Simmons: Nominee for the United States District Court Southern
District California

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

Please accept this letter as my recommendation for the Honorable James Simmons for the position of United States District Court Judge of the Southern District of California. I have had the honor and privilege of knowing Judge Simmons for almost 20 years. In that time, I have come to know him as an exceptional attorney and jurist. I first met Judge Simmons in the San Diego County District Attorney's Office. As a deputy district attorney, Judge Simmons rose quickly in the office. He was known for his intellect, advocacy skills, ethics, fairness, and his ability to work well with his colleagues and the defense bar. Prior to being appointed to the San Diego Superior Court, Judge Simmons was a member of the gang prosecution unit, where he prosecuted murder and complex gang related cases.

Based upon his work in the District Attorney's Office, Judge Simmons was appointed to the San Diego Superior Court at the age of 37. Once again, Judge Simmons rose quickly in the Superior Court. He presided over misdemeanor and felony cases in our North County Branch. Based upon his stellar reputation as a fair, ethical, and extremely hard-working jurist, he was selected to preside over the felony disposition department in the North County Branch. Because of his exceptional work as the felony disposition judge, the presiding judge of the San Diego Superior Court recognized his leadership

qualities and selected him to be the assistant supervising judge of the North County Branch. After a short stint as the assistant supervising judge, he was selected as the first African American supervising judge of the North County Branch of the San Diego Superior Court. Supervising Judge Simmons has a reputation for fairness and hard work. He has made significant changes to the North County Branch while at the same time dealing with lack of courtrooms due to the unfortunate collapse of the courthouse roof. Judge Simmons has worked tirelessly throughout this ordeal to make sure the North County Branch is functioning properly. He receives high praises from his colleagues as well as the attorneys that appear in front of him.

Although Judge Simmons is an excellent jurist, I believe what may be more important is his commitment to community service and family. Judge Simmons is a life member of the Earl B. Gilliam Bar Association, the California Association of Black Attorneys, as well as the African American Association of Californian Judicial Officers (AAACJO). He is an active member of the legal community and can be found speaking to attorneys and law students about their future career. Furthermore, he is extremely active in his children's lives as a coach and active participant in all their activities.

I highly recommend my friend to the position of United States District Court Judge. Judge Simmons will treat those who come in front of him fairly and with respect. Judge Simmons truly has a passion for the law and will work tirelessly if selected to serve on the federal bench. It is with great humility and pride that I was asked to write a letter of recommendation of Honorable James Simmons. I wholeheartedly without hesitation recommend him to serve on United States District Court.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 619-450-5555.

Sincerely,

Roderick W. Shelton

Hon. Roderick W. Shelton
San Diego Superior Court