



SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

CHAMBERS OF
CHARLES A. SMILEY
Presiding Judge
Department 1

Rene C. Davidson Courthouse
1225 Fallon Street
Oakland, California 94612

February 12, 2022

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Chairman
United States Senate 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

Re: Letter of Support for the Honorable Trina Thompson, Nominee for the United States District Court for the Northern District of California

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

As Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of California, County of Alameda, I write to share my emphatic support for the nomination of Judge Trina Thompson to serve as a judge on the United States District Court for the Northern District of California. She is eminently qualified for the position and will bring a wide range of talents to that role. Judge Thompson is a brilliant, hard-working jurist who is highly ethical, compassionate, and always well prepared. She is humble, fair, impartial, and an excellent representative of the judicial branch. She will excel as a federal district court judge.

Judge Thompson is an outstanding judicial officer who regularly presides over some of our county's most serious cases. I have known her for over 15 years and can report that she is adept at legal analysis and reasoning. She is known for exercising sound judgment and making well-reasoned decisions. Additionally, I have personally experienced her courtroom where she ensures that all court users are treated with professionalism, dignity, and respect. Simply put, she is one of the most talented trial judges in the region.

Court leadership comes in various forms. Judge Thompson has experienced many of them. She has supervised one of our busiest criminal courthouses (2003-2006) and been chosen to serve as Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Courts (2010-2011). These positions of increased responsibility require strong management skills and collaboration with justice stakeholders and community groups. We have also profited from the judge's leadership on judicial committees where court policy is often formed, and plans are devised to carry out the court's mission. Judge Thompson has led our Community Outreach, Education, and Information and Technology committees where she has brought fresh ideas to support our best work. These features of her state court work will likewise serve the federal district court well.

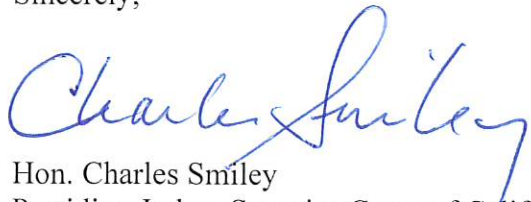
The judge's leadership also extends to her involvement in statewide judges' groups like the Association of African American Judicial Officers of California and the Center for Judiciary Education and Research on its Judicial Branch Ethics and Fairness Curriculum Committee. Both positions affirm how Judge Thompson is held in high regard by her judicial peers. Nationally, the judge's appointment to the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention further recognized the value of her contributions. Judge Thompson's prodigious body of work has been often distinguished by local, state, and national legal and civic groups. Over the years, the judge has received no less than 24 awards recognizing her service on the bench and in the community.

Judge Thompson's contributions to the judicial branch and legal profession generally expand far beyond the walls of her courtroom. She believes that the wealth of knowledge, experience, and skills garnered throughout her career is something to be shared with other judges, attorneys, students, and the public at large for our collective benefit. Accordingly, for example, Judge Thompson has presented judicial trainings to our judges and is currently assisting, at my request, the development of a series of informal lunchtime training sessions concerning jury trial management. But when I think of Judge Thompson's career to date, I am particularly impressed by her commitment to mentoring newer judicial officers, lawyers, and young people. She makes herself available to people, schools, and youth programs and has been a popular speaker on civics related topics. I believe that she views this informal mentoring and teaching as a responsibility of her position. She has always carried herself as an example to others and, by doing so, has been an inspiration to many – including me.

On a personal note, Judge Thompson is wonderful colleague who brings integrity and respect to the judicial institution through her high-quality work on and off the bench. She has always been, and will continue to be an honest, thorough, and purposeful public servant. While her departure from the state court will be a loss for our county, her confirmation to the federal district court will be an unqualified triumph for the country. I offer my wholehearted support for her nomination.

Thank you for considering my views on the nominee. I am available to expand upon my praise of Judge Trina Thompson at your further request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charles Smiley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Charles" and last name "Smiley" clearly legible.

Hon. Charles Smiley
Presiding Judge, Superior Court of California
County of Alameda