

December 4, 2022

Senator Richard Durbin, Chair
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Hart Senate Office Building, SH-711
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Charles Grassley, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Hart Senate Office Building, SH-135
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Confirmation of Charnelle Bjelkengren as a District Judge for the Eastern District of Washington

I am writing to enthusiastically support the confirmation of Charnelle Bjelkengren as a District Judge for the Eastern District of Washington. My experience with her may be a unique one. After 22 years as an attorney and another 20 years as a Spokane County District Court Judge I retired and applied for a part time position as an Administrative Law Judge with the Washington Office of Administrative Hearings.

As an Administrative Law Judge the nominee interviewed, hired, trained and supervised me. The cases I adjudicated were appeals from denial of unemployment benefits. This can be a surprisingly complex area of the law. My training involved observing her hold hearings, her observing me hold hearings and critiquing my findings and decisions. I enjoyed working with and for her.

I found her to be smart, hardworking, knowledgeable and thorough. She was courteous and able to communicate with claimants who were mostly unrepresented. She was objective, thoughtful, fair, and followed the law. Her pleasant personality and collegiality lends itself well to being a judge.

In my experience as a lawyer and later as a judge hearing many cases I can say that she is outstanding as a person and as a judge. Apparently our Governor also came to the same conclusion as he appointed her to the Spokane County Superior Court. Litigants will have the same confidence in her.

Very truly yours,



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