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The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. Senate
711 Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

I write to enter an enthusiastic recommendation on behalf of Ana Reyes as your Committee considers her nomination for a District Court judgeship in D.C. Ana would make a terrific addition to the bench, and I hope you will vote to confirm her.

Like many people, I first heard of Ana when I read the wonderful *Washington Post* article about her reunion with the grade-school teacher who taught her English when she first moved from Uruguay to Kentucky as a child. I then came to actually *know* her in October of last year, when we both joined the panel to help select the District's next federal magistrate judge. Ana chaired our 11-member team, which was incredibly diverse and consisted of both lawyers and non-lawyers. In the wrong hands, chairing this panel would be the worst kind of cat-herding—meetings would drag on, decisions wouldn't be made, and all of the things people often hate about being on panels and committees would happen.

But not so with Ana at the helm. From the beginning, Ana showed a truly remarkable ability to run our meetings in a way that ensured everyone's voices were heard, while at the same time not dragging things out for the sake of dragging them out. Our interviews with the many applicants finished on time, and we hit every deadline we set. And Ana accomplished all of this while always listening, and listening carefully, to what everyone had to say.

Ana also has an incredibly light touch. She's personable and funny, but never inappropriate. She kept our spirits up and showed a great deal of humility when talking with the members about things like who we should interview, what questions we should ask, and how we should whittle down the many applications to the final five that we were tasked with recommending.

Then there is her wonderful way of putting people at ease. For example, one of the candidates was having serious technical issues at the start of our (virtual) interview: she had trouble logging on, so joined several minutes late; when she finally managed to get on, her screen kept freezing, and we eventually had to run the audio through her phone and the video through WebEx, creating a slight lag between the audio and the video. All of this must have been a horrifying experience for the candidate, an experienced and careful lawyer who'd gone so far as to *do a test-run with Ana's paralegal* in order to ensure that nothing like this happened during the main event. So Ana voiced what everyone, including the candidate, was thinking. She said something like, "I am sure you're horrified by what's happening, but we know it's not your fault, we know you did a test run with my paralegal, and I promise you that this will have absolutely no bearing on the decision we make about your application." I am sure she said it even better than that—it was direct, it was funny, and it immediately cut the tension. The candidate visibly relaxed and proceeded to have a terrific interview.

Ana didn't have to do that. Most people, in my experience, wouldn't have done that, or at least wouldn't have done it in the way she did it. Instead, they would either have said nothing at all or said something so generic as to be unhelpful ("It's fine, don't worry about it."). What Ana did showed both a great degree of poise and a remarkable generosity of spirit. It said a lot about who she is.

And that goes to something else I have noticed about Ana: her judgment, which is perhaps the most important quality a judge can have. As I am sure you know, judgment is impossible to measure. It's usually even hard to describe. But you know it when you see it. After spending hours and hours with Ana interviewing candidates over several weeks, and then engaging with her on other issues when we were off camera, I am confident that Ana has excellent judgment and would bring that with her to the bench.

I also think that she'd just be a great colleague. Ana has struck me from the start as one of those people that everyone just likes. It was clear that everyone on our panel liked her—you can tell by the way they interacted with her. I am confident that, were she fortunate enough to join the District Court bench, she would quickly be beloved by everyone—from the most senior judges on down. She's smart, she's kind, she's approachable, and she is just *good people*.

Before I close, I feel duty-bound to tell you that I am a former Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Columbia and a lifelong conservative Republican. So I am not submitting this letter out of party loyalty or anything like that. I am writing it simply because I think Ana would make a great judge, even though we would doubtless disagree about certain political issues, and probably some legal ones, too. But I am old-fashioned enough to long for the days when, if the President nominated a qualified person for the bench, that person was usually confirmed with little drama. Ana is, of course, *tremendously* qualified. So when I

learned that she was starting the application process, I immediately offered to support her in any way that I could. Hence this letter.

Thank you for your consideration, and please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide you with any additional information in support of Ana's nomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin Dillon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Justin" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Dillon".

Justin Dillon