

P.O. Box 11145
Tempe, AZ 85284
www.nativeamericanbar.org
facebook.com/NationalNABA
twitter.com/@NationalNABA



President, Colleen E. Lamarre
Immediate Past President,
Thomasina Real Bird
President Elect, Phil Brodeen
Secretary, Heather Torres
Treasurer, Andrea Snowball

June 10, 2021

Senator Richard Durbin, Chairman
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: Support for Lauren J. King as a United States District Court Judge

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

I write to express the National Native American Bar Association's (NNABA) support of Lauren King to be a judge on the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington. Ms. King's background and experience will make her an outstanding judge on this court.

As our name implies, NNABA is a professional organization comprised of indigenous attorneys from what is now the United States: American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians. All branches of the federal government play an integral role in justice for Native Americans and their government-to-government relationship with the United States. The unique legal posture of Indian tribes to the federal government is deeply rooted in American history and has always been heavily intertwined with often-shifting federal Indian policy, but frequently a central role in justice for Native Americans rests with federal court judges. Accordingly, it is crucially important that consideration be given to individuals with experience or interest in federal Indian law and who respect the role of tribal sovereigns under the Constitution and treaties with the United States. Ms. King is a NNABA member who certainly possesses that experience and understanding and is also a strong candidate in every other regard.

Native Americans are alarmingly under-represented in the federal judiciary. Ms. King is a citizen of the Muscogee Nation, and, if confirmed, she will be the first Native American federal judge in the Western District of Washington. Likewise, there are only a two active Native American Article III judges: The Honorable Diane Humetewa of the District of Arizona and The Honorable Ada Brown of the Northern District of Texas. There is currently only one Native Hawaiian serving in the federal judiciary: The Honorable Derrick Watson of the District of Hawaii. Accordingly, confirming Ms. King is an important step forward in building a federal judiciary that mirrors America.

While judicial diversity is crucially important, our support for Ms. King is not simply because she is a Native American. She also meets and exceeds the qualifications required to serve as a federal judge and will bring important experience and perspective to the federal bench. Ms. King possesses a broad range of experience that she would bring to this judicial position. She is an experienced litigator who has handled a wide range of federal litigation, including complex commercial transactions, intellectual property, treaty

Support for Lauren King to Serve as US District Court Judge – Western District of Washington
June 10, 2021
Page 2

rights, cultural resources protections, and tribal jurisdiction. In addition, she has served since 2013 as a pro tem appellate judge for the Northwest Intertribal Court System, where she heard appeals on a broad range of issues, including commercial disputes, employment matters, and sovereign immunity. Ms. King has excelled in those roles and is well respected within the legal community.

In conclusion, NNABA enthusiastically supports the confirmation of Ms. King as a judge for the Western District of Washington. Thank you for considering our views. If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact me via e-mail at Colleen.Lamarre@pillsburylaw.com or via telephone at (415) 983-1056.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Colleen Lamarre".

Colleen E. Lamarre (Mohawk)
President
National Native American Bar Association