

June 13, 2022

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Chair
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. Senate
711 Hart Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley,

We write as colleagues of Rachel Bloomekatz, who has been nominated to serve as a judge on the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. We consider Rachel to be an excellent choice for this important position; based on our experiences with Rachel, we are extremely confident she possesses the professional talents and personal temperament necessary for distinguished service as a federal appellate judge.

Rachel's impressive educational background and considerable professional accomplishments, all of which will contribute to her success as a jurist, merit mention at the outset of this letter (and could easily take up many pages). Rachel achieved at the highest level throughout her academic career, graduating with honors from Harvard University before thereafter securing the inaugural Emile Joseph Stache Scholarship (a merit-based, full-tuition, public interest scholarship) in the Epstein Program in Public Interest Law and Policy at UCLA School of Law. While an undergraduate at Harvard, Rachel volunteered at the nation's first Medical-Legal Partnership at Boston Medical Center; while a law student at UCLA, she worked at Bet Tzedek Legal Services and at the Los Angeles civil rights firm Hadsell & Stormer. Through these and other engagements, Rachel deepened her understanding of the critical impact the law and its proper application can have on the lives of working families, immigrants, and children.

While still in law school, Rachel began an extraordinary period of service to the federal and state judiciary and other government actors. She first served as a full-time extern to Judge Algenon Marbley of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Ohio. Following law school, Rachel clerked for Judge Guido Calabresi of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. The following year, Rachel was a law clerk for Chief Justice Margaret Marshall of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court and then served as an Assistant Attorney General in the office of the Massachusetts Attorney General. Last but certainly not least, Rachel then gained experience at our nation's highest court by serving as a law clerk to Associate Justice Stephen Breyer of the Supreme Court of the United States.

Rachel's subsequent professional experiences and accomplishments as a lawyer continued to contribute to her deep understanding and knowledge about the law and lawyering. She first worked at the large law firm Jones Day as a member of the firm's Issues and Appeals group. Among other work, at Jones Day, Rachel represented pro bono the juvenile with the longest sentence in Ohio, winning resentencing on Eighth Amendment grounds before the Supreme Court of Ohio. Rachel thereafter was a principal at the small law firm Gupta Wessler PLLC, a premier appellate boutique where she co-authored many U.S. Supreme Court briefs and served as lead counsel for successful appeals in the Fourth and Sixth Circuits. She most recently established Bloomekatz Law LLC, a public interest law firm focusing on federal and state appellate practice.

Rachel's academic and professional achievements are most obviously a testament to her intellectual abilities and legal acumen. Widely viewed as a brilliant appellate advocate and dedicated public-interest attorney, Rachel has built a sterling reputation in state and federal courts around the country. Rachel's experiences in a diverse set of professional and academic settings ensure she would bring varied insights to the issues and people she would encounter as a federal judge. Rachel has worked on (and litigated) legal issues large and small in both federal and state systems, and she has extensive experiences as an appellate litigant and as someone who has assisted judges at all levels of the state and federal judiciary. This breadth of knowledge and experience will serve her very well in the role of a U.S. Circuit Judge.

Broader qualifications and experiences aside, we know based on our interactions with Rachel as a professional colleague that she has the talents and temperament that make her very well suited to judicial service. The disposition necessary to be a successful judge seems to us similar to that required to be an effective law professor. Rachel is an effective law professor because she takes a fair-minded approach to legal discussions and issues and because she treats with respect students and fellow scholars who have different backgrounds and beliefs. Rachel's strong teaching reputation at the Moritz College of Law both as an adjunct and as a mentor to many students is due to her deep and extensive knowledge of the law, and to the sincere and even-tempered manner with which she interacts with people and explores complex issues. Rachel's work in the classroom reflects a deep thinker working carefully through issues with a fair-minded assessment of the interests and individuals involved—the same qualities that will make her an excellent judge.

Rachel has in recent years taught the Federal Courts class at the Moritz College of Law, and the deans who have reviewed her student evaluations report that she consistently receives the highest marks possible from students praising her knowledge of the subject, her class preparation, and her interest in helping students. In these anonymous evaluations, students have commented that Rachel is a "fantastic professor" whose "expertise is astonishing" and who "excels at explaining complex concepts/doctrines in easily approachable ways." An often repeated sentiment in these evaluations was that Rachel "truly cared about her students and that came through every day."

In sum, knowing Rachel as a law school colleague, we can say without reservation that she is an outstanding attorney who is abundantly qualified to serve on the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. Rachel is remarkably talented, and we are confident that she would bring to the bench the kind of careful, deliberate, thoughtful and well-reasoned decision-making that accords with the highest standards of our federal judiciary. Rachel is an attorney whose brilliance, experience, and integrity would make her a phenomenal appellate judge. We commend her to you with respect and without reservation.

Sincerely,

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