



1116 W Broadway Ave,
4th Floor Annex
Spokane, WA 99260
Service@SpokaneBar.org

January 20, 2023

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 Judge Charnelle Bjelkengren's Appointment to the Eastern District of
Washington Bench

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley,

We write this letter in our personal capacities in support of Judge Charnelle Bjelkengren's Appointment to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Washington. Our recommendation is that Judge Bjelkengren be confirmed without qualification; she will be a fantastic Article III judge.

We are the President and the Young Lawyers President of the Spokane County Bar Association. The Spokane County Bar Association is a local bar association for attorneys practicing in Spokane County. Spokane is the largest city and County in the Eastern District of Washington. We have over 900 members throughout Spokane and the surrounding counties. This board is also tasked with governing the Spokane County Volunteer Lawyers Program, which serves the community through pro bono legal services.

In her time serving on the bench in Spokane County Superior Court, Judge Bjelkengren quickly earned a reputation of respect for the judicial process and the ability to be respectful to counsel and litigants and to treat participants with dignity and fairness. She volunteered her free time to sit on our local Standing Advisory Committee for our Volunteer Lawyer Committee, the strategic team dedicated to ensuring that the Spokane Volunteer Lawyers program runs smoothly and maintains its reputation and funding. She was also an active member in the SCBA's Diversity Section, and instrumental in bringing Spokane County's Systemic Racism Continuing Learning Education Seminar into being, a program that the Washington State Bar Association used as a springboard to further equality education in our state. Judge Bjelkengren has demonstrated exemplary care and compassion for the community and for the judicial process.

We have both practiced before Judge Bjelkengren and we are both impressed with her ability to learn new areas of law quickly and give reasoned and well thought decisions. When we presented this letter to members of the Spokane County Bar Association Board of Trustees for submission, one of the board members joked "If we don't recommend her, can we have her back in the Superior Court?" This statement, while intended as a joke, speaks volumes about the



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reputation Judge Bjelkengren has in our community. We are excited to see her move on to a career better suited to her abilities, but sad to see her go as an exceptionally well qualified judicial officer. The Eastern District of Washington will be blessed to have her.

In short, Judge Bjelkengren displays the qualities that we hope for in a judicial officer in the Eastern District of Washington. Ms. Puryear and I are delighted to be able to support Judge Bjelkengren's confirmation.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Zigler, President of the Spokane County Bar Association
(Go Zags!)

[Joanna Puryear \(Jan 20, 2023 13:36 PST\)](#)

Joanna Puryear, President of Young Lawyers Section of Spokane County Bar Association
(Go Cougs!)







2023.01.20 Letter of Support Judge Bjelkengren

Final Audit Report

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