

HON. ELIZABETH POLLARD HINES (Ret.)  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

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February 23, 2022

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin  
Chairman, Committee on the  
Judiciary United States Senate  
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck E. Grassley  
Ranking Member, Committee on the  
Judiciary United States Senate 224  
Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Nusrat Choudhury, Nominee for the US District Court for the Eastern District of New York

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

It is a personal and professional privilege to support the nomination of Nusrat Choudhury for the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York.

Nusrat's impressive resume speaks for itself-- her stellar academic and legal career, her litigation experience in the EDNY, her federal judicial clerkships, and extensive management expertise. Please allow me to address some qualities that may not be evident on Nusrat's resume but are qualities that, in my opinion, make the best and fairest judges.

By way of background, I had the privilege of serving as a judge in the 15th District Court in Ann Arbor, Michigan, from 1993 until I chose to retire, November 1, 2020. I have been fortunate to work with local, state and national organizations, including the American Judges Association, the Center for Court Innovation in NY (CCI), the Office on Violence Against Women of the US Department of Justice, and the National Center for State

Courts (NCSC). In almost 28 years on the bench and 15 years as an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney before that, I have observed many judges. Until I retired, I helped train new judges in Michigan. I've served as a mentor judge and Chief Judge. I was asked by CCI to evaluate courts in other states. Judges in Michigan and other states were sent to my courtroom to observe proceedings. I was recognized by my Michigan peers with the first statewide "Judicial Excellence Award". In 2018, I was honored and humbled to be the one judge in the country awarded the "William H. Rehnquist Award for Judicial Excellence" from the NCSC, presented by Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr., at the US Supreme Court. I share this information with you only as context for my opinion and recommendation.

As the judge chosen to represent the American Judges Association on the *National Task Force on Fines, Fees and Bail Practices* created in 2016 by the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) and the Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA), I worked closely with Nusrat on various months-long projects. As but one example: Nusrat and I spent many hours over several months crafting the template for what was ultimately approved as the bench card for the "Lawful Collection of Legal Financial Obligations" for use by judges nationwide. I was impressed by the breadth of Nusrat's legal knowledge, her passion for fairness, her inclusive nature and unfailingly kind demeanor. In her quiet way, she succeeded in listening to all of our differing viewpoints, experiences and opinions, synthesizing them in accordance with the law and creating a product we could all accept. On a variety of topics, if we wanted to find an objective, accurate statement of a legal principle or law to guide us with policy issues, we knew to ask Nusrat. Even if the ACLU's official position sought more policy changes, Nusrat followed the law. Her work ethic is remarkable. I quickly learned that if you need something done and done right, ask Nusrat. She is indefatigable. I recall many late night conversations on Task Force issues after we each completed our full-time "day" jobs.

I believe that Nusrat earned the respect of everyone on the Task Force who had the pleasure of working with her. Although she never sought the limelight, she was a leader with the gentlest of touches, a quiet treasure. I was so impressed with Nusrat that, after the Task Force, I remained in touch and followed her career in New York to Chicago as the Legal Director of the ACLU of Illinois.

In my opinion, an often-overlooked but important quality of a good judge is the ability to patiently listen. Nusrat listens, really listens. She is bright, careful, hard-working, patient, even tempered, diplomatic and respectful to all, regardless of their title or position. Based on my courtroom experience and hands-on work with Nusrat on the CCJ/COSCA National Task Force, I have no doubt that she would be an exceptional judge, one who

issues clear, well-reasoned, thoughtful decisions based on the law and arguments of the parties, not politics.

Without reservation, I respectfully urge the Senate Judiciary Committee to advance to the full Senate the nomination of Nusrat Choudhury for District Court Judge on the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York.

Thank you for considering my views.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elizabeth Pollard Hines". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Elizabeth Pollard Hines