



U.S. Department of Justice

*W. Stephen Muldrow*  
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July 1, 2022

The Honorable Dick Durbin  
Chair, Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
711 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley  
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
135 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Committee on the Judiciary,

I am writing you in support of the confirmation of Maria Antongiorgi-Jordan as United States District Court Judge for the District of Puerto Rico.

Since October 2019, when I was sworn in as the United States Attorney for the District of Puerto Rico, I have worked directly with Ms. Antongiorgi in her role as the Clerk of Court for the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico. Based on my personal interactions with her, I can attest to her professionalism, dedication to her important work as Clerk of Court, support for important initiatives in the district, positive attitude and temperament, and the outstanding job she has done in an extremely challenging environment (*e.g.*, COVID-19 pandemic, earthquakes, and an exceptionally heavy court docket).

My support of Ms. Antongiorgi is also informed by my discussions with members of my Executive Management team, who have interacted with her for longer than I have, including in her role as a Criminal Justice Act (CJA) defense attorney, and whose opinions I trust and value.

I met Ms. Antongiorgi when I arrived in Puerto Rico and, by early 2020, Puerto Rico suffered repeated earthquakes that disrupted the island. A couple of months later, the global COVID-19 pandemic struck, leading to unprecedented changes and challenges to the operations of the Court and all federal, state, and local agencies.

In order to address those challenges, I met with members of the judiciary, other federal agencies, and Ms. Antongiorgi to establish health and safety protocols. I was impressed by Ms. Antongiorgi's professionalism, positive demeanor and temperament, willingness to listen to others, and her judgment.

Notwithstanding the highly contagious nature of COVID-19 and the fact that the courthouse was appropriately closed to all in-person court proceedings, Ms. Antongiorgi immediately recognized the importance of keeping the federal Grand Jury running in Puerto Rico. Federal agencies, including the U.S. Attorney's Office, are recognized by the community as playing a critical role in combatting violent crime, drug trafficking, public corruption and a host of other crimes that plague Puerto Rico. Within a couple of months of the institution of strict COVID-19 protocols and maximum telework, Ms. Antongiorgi took the necessary steps to allow the Grand Jury to meet. This was done only after she implemented very strict health, social distancing, and other precautionary measures. This enabled Puerto Rico to continue to indict significant and important criminal cases when most districts had no Grand Jury practice at all.

In connection with the Grand Jury, Ms. Antongiorgi alleviated health and safety concerns expressed by grand jury members about meeting during the pandemic. Ms. Antongiorgi did an exceptional job (as I personally witnessed) in explaining, with compassion and clarity, all of the steps and safety measures taken to ensure the health of members of the Grand Jury.

Ms. Antongiorgi also played an important role in supporting the creation of a new re-entry program in Puerto Rico in 2021 for defendants released on supervised release. That program, the Reentry Supervised Release Court Alternative (RESCATE, which means rescue in Spanish), took place in person and in court notwithstanding the difficulties presented by COVID-19. Ms. Antongiorgi joined together with the Public Defender's Office, the U.S. Probation Office, and the U.S. Attorney's Office to implement this new program designed to provide qualified participants with opportunities to improve their living conditions and community integration with a goal of reducing recidivism.

In addition, Ms. Antongiorgi supported another important community engagement program, project LEAD, implemented during the pandemic. The initiative involves 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and a semester-long program using the federal court and criminal justice system as a foundation for teaching the value of making good choices. Ms. Antongiorgi facilitated the use of the federal courthouse to hold mock trials for each class at the end of the program. Her support of this program typifies her professionalism, collegiality, and commitment to the community.

In early 2021, when vaccines became available in Puerto Rico through the Puerto Rico National Guard, Ms. Antongiorgi exhibited great leadership and volunteered the use of large areas within the courthouse property for vaccinations of countless court, federal law enforcement, and other personnel. While the efficiency of the protocols set up by Ms. Antongiorgi was exceptional, what impressed me most about the process was seeing her hands-on approach to ensuring the success of this critical vaccination program. Not only did I see Ms. Antongiorgi helping out on each of the three days of my vaccinations, she even worked at the check-in table, greeting and checking people off the list as they came into the courthouse. This exemplifies her humility and dedication and reflects qualities that would serve her well as a judge.

In preparation for writing this letter, I have also reviewed Ms. Antongiorgi's resume, which details an extensive and accomplished career of public service and legal practice involving both civil and criminal cases. Ms. Antongiorgi is no stranger to the courtroom and active practice of law, as reflected by her extensive litigation and trial experience, continuing legal education, speaking and teaching engagements, and special appointments and recognition. Her professional experience and training will allow her to capably and effectively handle the rigors and demands of Puerto Rico's busy trial and case dockets.

For the reasons outlined above, I support Ms. Antongiorgi's confirmation as a United States District Court Judge for the District of Puerto Rico without reservation. I am available to answer any questions, and can be reached via email at [w.stephen.muldrow@usdoj.gov](mailto:w.stephen.muldrow@usdoj.gov) or at my direct office number -- (787) 282-1901.

Sincerely,



W. Stephen Muldrow  
United States Attorney