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PRESIDENT
RAKIM BROOKS

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PAULETTE MEYER

May 21, 2024

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Chairman
Senate Judiciary Committee

Dear Chairman Durbin:

On behalf of the Alliance for Justice (AFJ), a national association representing more than 150 public interest and civil rights organizations, I write to express our strong support for Danna Jackson's nomination to the United States District Court for the District of Montana. Jackson is an immensely qualified nominee whose expertise in environmental and federal Indian law would bring much needed professional diversity to the bench. If confirmed, she would also make history as the first Native American judge to serve on the District of Montana.

A Montanan through and through, Jackson is well-positioned to step into a role on the state's district court. Raised on a cattle ranch on Montana's Flathead Indian Reservation, Jackson earned both her B.A. and J.D. from the University of Montana. Her deep ties to the Treasure State will serve her well on the federal bench. We are confident that she is well-aware of the issues facing her fellow Montanans and prepared to bring a uniquely Montanan perspective to the federal bench.

Regarding her legal career, Jackson is a well-respected attorney with law firm, federal government, and tribal government experience. She started her career working at the Federal Indian Gaming Commission, eventually leaving to work at the U.S. Senate as a legislative assistant to Senator Tim Johnson (D-SD). In 2005, she left the Senate for prestigious D.C. law firm Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP. After five years at the firm, she returned to the federal government, joining the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Montana as an Assistant U.S. Attorney and Tribal Liaison. She then worked at the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation and the Bureau of Land Management – further growing her environmental law expertise. Today, Jackson serves as the Tribal Attorney for the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.

An expert in environmental and federal Indian law, Jackson would bring much needed professional diversity to the federal bench. Few federal judges have experience in either area, let alone both, and we are thrilled to see a judge with such important legal experience nominated to the District of Montana. Federal

courts hear hundreds, if not thousands, of environmental law and federal Indian law cases each year, and the fact that so few judges have experience in either area is as shocking as it is concerning. Jackson's confirmation would help balance the bench by bringing this important and underrepresented experience to the court.

Jackson would also bring needed demographic diversity to the bench as the first Native American judge to sit on the District of Montana. She would be just the seventh native judge to sit on a federal court in our nation's history. Jackson's nomination would go a long way to increasing the demographic diversity of our federal courts and ensuring that Native American communities are represented on the federal bench.

In sum, Jackson is a tremendous candidate for the District of Montana. She is a talented attorney with an impressive legal background befitting a federal judge. Montanans would be well-served by a judge of Jackson's caliber – a judge who is not only committed to serving the community but comes from the community herself.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rakim H.D. Brooks".

Rakim Brooks
President, Alliance for Justice