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PRESIDENT  
**RAKIM BROOKS**

CHAIR  
**PAULETTE MEYER**

June 17, 2024

The Honorable Richard Durbin  
Chairman  
Senate Judiciary Committee

Dear Chairman Durbin:

On behalf of the Alliance for Justice, a national association representing more than 150 diverse organizations united in our commitment to justice, I write to express our support for the confirmation of Catherine Henry to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. With over 20 years of dedicated service as a public defender, Henry will bring invaluable professional diversity and expertise to the federal bench.

A graduate of Drew University and the University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School, Henry began her legal career as a staff attorney for the Feminist Majority Foundation. She played a crucial role in advancing women's equality through policy research and review. After leaving the foundation, she devoted her career to public defense, specializing in criminal defense. In 1996, Henry joined the Defender Association of Philadelphia as an assistant defender, representing clients at every stage of the Pennsylvania state criminal justice process. Her experience in this role spanned major trials, felony waivers, and juvenile delinquency proceedings, underscoring her unwavering commitment to justice and robust legal defense.

Since 2001, she has served as an assistant federal defender with the Federal Community Defender Office for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, excelling in jury trials and sentencing litigation across a broad spectrum of cases, including complex fraud schemes, major drug conspiracies, firearms offenses, and violent crimes. Her exceptional skills and commitment led to her promotion to senior litigator in 2008. In this role, Henry not only manages a full caseload of federal criminal matters but also provides invaluable mentorship and support to assistant federal defenders, enhancing their litigation skills. Additionally, she is deeply invested in the professional development of her colleagues, conducting formal training in trial advocacy for new attorneys and litigation support staff. As senior litigator at the Community Defender's Office, Henry expertly guides attorneys through all aspects of litigation, offering critical advice on case strategy, pretrial motions, jury selection, and sentencing issues. She also provides comprehensive training in trial advocacy, ensuring new attorneys are well-prepared for the challenges they face. Henry's dedication to justice and advocacy over the past 20 years as a public defender in the very federal district she is now being appointed to serve as a judge makes her an outstanding candidate.

Henry's expertise is widely recognized, and she is a lecturer on federal criminal trial issues, frequently training assistant federal defenders and Criminal Justice Act attorneys. Her leadership was further acknowledged in 2023 when she was appointed chair of the Public Defenders Committee of the American College of Trial Lawyers. In this role, she collaborates with fellows to organize training sessions and provide support to criminal defense attorneys nationwide. Additionally, Henry serves as the volunteer defender representative for the Supervision to Aid Reentry (STAR) Program, a federal initiative that helps ex-offenders reintegrate into society after serving lengthy sentences. Her commitment to this program highlights her compassionate approach and dedication to supporting justice and rehabilitation.

As an annual instructor of Trial Advocacy at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, Henry has demonstrated her commitment to training the next generation of lawyers. She has also served as a Trial Advocacy instructor in the LL.M. program at Temple University Beasley School of Law, where she led lectures and mock trial exercises, providing invaluable hands-on experience to students. Furthermore, Henry's former role as the instructor for students participating in the federal criminal clinic at Temple University Beasley School of Law showcases her deep expertise in federal criminal law and her dedication to mentoring aspiring defense attorneys.

Given her outstanding qualifications, we strongly urge the Senate to confirm Catherine Henry to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania without delay. Henry's professional journey, marked by deep dedication to public service, makes her an exceptional candidate for the federal bench. Her extensive experience and steadfast dedication to upholding justice would be an invaluable addition to our judiciary.

Sincerely,

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

Rakim Brooks  
President, Alliance for Justice