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PRESIDENT

Rachel Rossi

CHAIR

Madeline deLone

June 2, 2026

Senator Charles Grassley
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee

Senator Richard Durbin
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee

Dear Chair Grassley and Ranking Member Durbin,

On behalf of the Alliance for Justice (AFJ), a national association representing nearly 140 public interest and civil rights organizations, we firmly urge you and your colleagues on the Senate Judiciary Committee to reject the nomination of Angela Colmenero to the United District Court for the Southern District of Texas. Colmenero's record, actions, and many documented biases against marginalized communities across Texas confirm that she is unfit and unqualified to serve as a federal judge. If confirmed to a lifetime seat on the federal bench, Colmenero's demonstrated commitment to furthering far-right ideologies will drive her decision making, undermining the Constitution, fairness, and equal justice for all.

Colmenero has regularly defended laws that make it harder for everyday people, especially Black and Latino voters, to exercise their fundamental right to vote. She served as lead counsel in *Veasey v. Abbott* (5th Cir. 2016) (en banc), where she defended a Texas photo-ID voting law that courts found disproportionately burdened Black and Latino voters in violation of the Voting Rights Act. After courts found evidence of discriminatory intent, Colmenero continued to defend this law, guiding the Texas legislature through workarounds to "cure" the law's discriminatory effects. Colmenero also served as trial counsel for Texas in multiple other cases, defending Texas's 2011 and 2013 congressional and state legislative redistricting maps against Voting Rights Act challenges. The court found discriminatory intent in several of these districts. Lastly, Colmenero served as trial counsel in Texas's failed attempts to obtain Section 5 preclearance for its 2011 redistricting plans, which the court ultimately denied after finding the plans were drawn specifically to disadvantage minority voters.

Not only has Colmenero consistently attempted to dilute Texans' voting rights, but she has also worked to break up immigrant families. Colmenero served as trial counsel in Texas v. United States (5th Cir. 2015), where she represented Texas and a group of other states that challenged the Obama administration's DAPA (Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents) program and the expansion of DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals). These changes would have extended protections for millions of undocumented immigrants, making it easier for families to stay together and delay deportation. Colmenero's heavy involvement in such politicized cases raises questions about her ability to stay fair and impartial as a judge presiding over the same communities she has actively worked against.

Further, Colmenero has repeatedly made efforts to defend Texas's abortion ban. Under her leadership, the Texas Office of the Attorney General defended the state's position in Zurawski v. State of Texas (Texas 2023), the landmark challenge to Texas's near total abortion ban and its medical exception provisions. This appeal attempted to overturn a lower court's temporary injunction stopping enforcement of Texas's abortion laws in certain circumstances. If Colmenero had succeeded in defeating the temporary injunction, Texas's overlapping abortion bans would have made it nearly impossible to gain access to reproductive care within the state. These bans put pregnant people at risk and are weaponized to deny lifesaving care.

In her role as the interim Texas attorney general, Colmenero directed her office to appeal a Travis County District Court judge's ruling to stop Texas from enforcing SB 14, a state law that prohibited necessary and lifesaving gender affirming care for young people. The bill would have severed access to care for adolescents who were already receiving treatment and revoked the medical licenses of doctors providing the best standard of care to their transgender patients. Additionally, Colmenero reviewed and approved the Texas State Preservation Board's controversial restroom policy, which designated all public restrooms overseen by the board as only "men's," "women's," or "family care" and required that individuals use the restroom corresponding to their "biological sex." Such policies prohibit trans individuals from using restrooms that align with who they are. This policy extended to bathrooms at the Texas State Capitol and was part of broader Texas attacks on transgender individuals. Colmenero's direct role in creating and greenlighting harmful policies such as this one renders her unfit to potentially rule on such policies as a judge.

For all these reasons, Alliance for Justice strongly opposes the confirmation of Angela Colmenero to the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rachel Rossi".

Rachel Rossi
President, Alliance for Justice