



PRESIDENT
RAKIM BROOKS

CHAIR
PAULETTE MEYER

November 1, 2021

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 130 public interest and civil rights organizations, I write to strongly support the confirmation of Justice Gabriel Sanchez to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

Justice Sanchez's stellar credentials and varied legal experience make him an exceptional candidate to serve on the Ninth Circuit. From the outset of his career as a law firm associate to his high-level leadership in state government and time on the bench, he has consistently demonstrated a commitment to equal justice. This also proves to be a full circle moment, as Justice Sanchez clerked for the Honorable Richard A. Paez on the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, the same court to which he is nominated.

Specifically, as you will see in the report attached, we deeply admire Justice Sanchez's work on the bench and off. As a law firm associate, he maintained an active pro bono practice representing disadvantaged and indigent clients and received the ACLU's Social Justice Award in 2010. He then went on to public service, where he worked on historic criminal justice reform. From 2012 to 2018, as Governor Edmund G. Brown's Deputy Legal Affairs Secretary, Justice Sanchez, among other things, played a leading role in implementing prison population reduction measures after the Supreme Court found California's prison capacity ratio unconstitutional. This was a thoughtful, celebrated strategy that protected both prisoners' rights and public safety. Justice Sanchez also advised the administration on criminal justice reform legislation, executive appointments, and parole and clemency decisions, and was a principal author of the landmark Public Safety and Rehabilitation Act of 2016 (Proposition 57). The legislation was overwhelmingly approved by California voters with 65% support and expanded rehabilitative programs, limited prosecutorial authority to try youth as adults, and established a framework for prison safety regulations.

In 2018, Governor Brown appointed Justice Sanchez to be the first male Latino justice ever on the California Court of Appeal, First Appellate District. Since his appointment, Justice Sanchez has authored or joined nearly 500 opinions involving a wide variety of legal issues. Of the approximately 150 decisions that he has authored, only two have been reversed by a reviewing court. Justice Sanchez's rulings reflect a fair and impartial jurist with an abiding commitment to equal justice, no matter the litigants before him.

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If confirmed, Justice Sanchez would bring critical demographic diversity to the Ninth Circuit, the largest federal court in the country and one serving a large Latino population. His legal career reflects a deep commitment to the rule of law and the safeguarding of our constitutional rights. Given his exemplary qualifications, the Senate should swiftly confirm Justice Gabriel Sanchez to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rakim Brooks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a distinct "B".

Rakim Brooks
President, Alliance for Justice