



PRESIDENT
RAKIM BROOKS

CHAIR
PAULETTE MEYER

September 20, 2022

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Chairman
Senate Judiciary Committee

Dear Chairman Durbin:

On behalf of the Alliance for Justice (AFJ), a national association representing 151 public interest and civil rights organizations, I write to strongly support the confirmation of Julie Rikelman to the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit.

Ms. Rikelman's lived experience and deep commitment to equal justice make her uniquely qualified to serve on the federal bench. When she was six years old, her family immigrated to the United States after experiencing anti-Semitism in the former Soviet Union. Barely speaking English, they settled in Brookline, Massachusetts and initially relied on government assistance and non-profit organizations to make ends meet. This personal experience forged Ms. Rikelman's understanding of equal justice under law and her commitment to fairness for all persons. After working throughout high school and college to save money for her education, she went on to earn her B.A. and J.D. with honors from Harvard University.

Ms. Rikelman's exemplary and varied career, in both the public and private sectors, has fully prepared her to tackle the diverse set of complex legal issues she may encounter as a federal appellate judge. Ms. Rikelman clerked for two appellate judges, Judge Morton Greenberg of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit and Justice Dana Fabe of Alaska's Supreme Court. She has worked in law firms, as in-house litigation counsel for NBC Universal, and as the U.S. Litigation Director for the Center of Reproductive Rights. Her breadth of litigation experience on issues ranges from corporate contract disputes to securities fraud to environmental and constitutional law. She has argued cases at the trial and appellate levels in state and federal court, including arguing two major constitutional cases at the U.S. Supreme Court.

Ms. Rikelman has also demonstrated her commitment to equal justice for all through her public interest career and her pro bono cases. She has received numerous awards for public interest work, including the American Association of Justice (AAJ) Leonard Weinglass in Defense of Civil Liberties Award in 2022. Additionally,

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while in private practice, she regularly represented clients on a pro bono basis and won the National Law Journal Pro Bono Award in 2004.

Given her personal and professional background, extensive appellate experience, and proven commitment to equal justice for all, the Senate should expeditiously confirm Julie Rikelman to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit.

Sincerely,

Rakim H.D. Brooks

Rakim Brooks
President, Alliance for Justice