

April 3, 2020

Dear Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Feinstein:

We strongly support President Trump's nomination of Judge Justin Walker to serve on the United States Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, and we urge you to confirm him at the earliest opportunity.

As befits the unusual role of the D.C. Circuit in our judicial system, Presidents have historically selected judges for this court from a nationwide talent pool. Though this tradition has ebbed in recent years, we are delighted that President Trump has revived it. The D.C. Circuit has the last word on dozens of disputes arising every year out of the administrative state, directly affecting the rights of every American. It is only right that the best and the brightest from across the country should decide these crucial questions—not just those who are best at playing the D.C.-insider game.

Walker's everyday-American upbringing, impeccable credentials, dedication to principled judging, and reputation for collegiality is impressive. He was born and raised in Louisville by his mother, who, like all of his grandparents, did not graduate from college. Yet Walker graduated *summa cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa from Duke and *magna cum laude* from Harvard Law, then went on to clerk for then-Judge Brett Kavanaugh on the D.C. Circuit (the court to which Walker is nominated) and Justice Anthony Kennedy on the Supreme Court of the United States.

Walker briefly worked at a D.C. law firm before returning home to Kentucky, where he practiced law and became a tenure-track professor at the University of Louisville Brandeis School of Law and, a few years later, a federal judge. Now he is the youngest nominee to the D.C. Circuit in a generation. His is an American success story.

What makes Judge Walker an excellent choice for the D.C. Circuit is his reputation for combining his principles with Midwestern collegiality. Last year, hundreds of Kentuckians from across the political spectrum wrote letters to this Committee supporting Judge Walker's nomination to the district court. More than 100 of Judge Walker's former law students praised "the intellectual rigor and passion for even handed justice he will bring to the bench." A diverse group of more than 100 Kentucky lawyers called Judge Walker "a person of integrity who cares about the rule of law and the dignity of the individual." And 23 of his former partners in private practice wrote that

“Justin is a tolerant person who enjoys exchanging ideas with persons of varying perspectives and backgrounds. He is delightful, empathetic and humble.”

A judge has to set aside his personal views and follow the law, even when he disagrees with it. Judge Walker is a committed constitutionalist who understands a judge’s modest, but critical, role is to interpret the law as written—not how that judge wishes it were written if he were a senator.

Being a federal judge is difficult work. So is being a law professor, a Supreme Court clerk, and a top graduate of Harvard Law School. But Judge Walker has always made time for people who need his help. Thirteen (13) of his former law-student research assistants wrote last year that “[m]ost of us belong to an historically disenfranchised gender or race, and it is no exaggeration to say that no professor did more than Justin to promote our careers.” He has taught writing skills to underprivileged high-school students in Louisville. And for six years, he served as the unpaid executive director of the Global Game Changers Student Empowerment Program, which teaches underserved elementary school children that no matter how young they are and no matter where they come from, they can make a difference in the world.

Judge Walker would know. He’s living proof that in America, where you come from doesn’t limit what you can achieve. Every member of this Committee and every American of goodwill should support Judge Walker’s nomination to the D.C. Circuit.

Respectfully submitted,

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