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May 3, 2021

Via Email and U.S. Mail

dc.jnc@dc.gov

Tracy Brinkley Nutall, Executive Director

D.C. Judicial Nomination Commission

515 5th Street NW, Suite 235

Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: Support for Alice Wang for the Position of Associate Judge,
District of Columbia Court of Appeals

Dear Honorable Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission:

Washington Council of Lawyers is pleased to express its support for Ms. Alice Wang for the position of Associate Judge on the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.

Washington Council of Lawyers is the public interest bar association for the District of Columbia. Our mission is to promote the practice of pro bono and public interest law in the District; and our expanding membership includes lawyers, legal professionals, law students, and others committed to advancing issues important to the public interest community. Washington Council of Lawyers offers its support for a judicial candidate, such as Ms. Wang, when that candidate has a long personal history of serving the underserved and promoting equal access to justice.

Ms. Wang is currently Deputy Chief of the Appellate Division of the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia (PDS), and she has worked effectively as a public defender at PDS for more than 15 years. In her work, she represents indigent individuals in criminal and juvenile delinquency cases day in and day out, litigating over 100 appeals and postconviction matters in the District of Columbia, including several recent *en banc* cases in the D.C. Court of Appeals. Through her direct representation of clients and regular appearances as *amicus curiae* in the D.C. Court of Appeals, she has also worked to make the local criminal justice system fairer and more humane, especially for people of color and others who are disproportionately harmed by overincarceration.

In addition to Ms. Wang's many successful direct representations of indigent individuals through her work at PDS, she has also devoted a substantial portion of her career to improving the overall quality of criminal

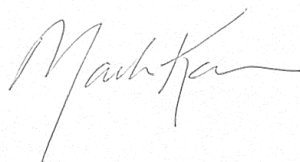
defense in the District of Columbia by regularly providing trainings, case consultations, and resources to the local defense bar. Most recently, during the COVID-19 pandemic, she provided substantial support to attorneys filing motions for compassionate release on behalf of incarcerated clients; this work included providing sample pleadings and case consultation, recommending expert witnesses, and filing amicus briefs.

Ms. Wang has also dedicated substantial time and resources toward advancing educational opportunities for the local immigrant community, including undocumented youth. In 2009, she cofounded the Esperanza Education Fund (www.esperanzafund.org), a college scholarship and mentorship program that serves underprivileged immigrant students in the D.C. area, regardless of ethnicity, national origin, or immigration status. Ms. Wang served as Chair of the Board of Directors from 2009 to 2015, during which time Esperanza won over \$200,000 in grants from private foundations and from the D.C. Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs, and received a 2010 Equal Justice Award from the Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia. In 2018, Ms. Wang represented Esperanza in accepting the D.C. Courts Community Agency CORO Award for service to the D.C. Latino community. To date, Esperanza has awarded over \$1 million in scholarships to more than 100 immigrant students from all over the world. She also helped launch Ascend Educational Fund, a sister organization in New York City.

Ms. Wang also spends time volunteering at her neighborhood public school. As co-chair of the Hearst Elementary School Local School Advisory Team (LSAT), she spearheaded a campaign to address overcrowding at the school and secured a commitment from D.C. Public Schools and the Mayor's Office to expand our school facilities through temporary and permanent additions.

In sum, Ms. Wang's impressive career well-demonstrates her commitment to protecting and expanding access to justice. Her years of experience as an appellate defense lawyer for underserved individuals seems like a uniquely compelling reason to recommend her for this particular judicial vacancy. The Washington Council of Lawyers believes her experience reveals a passion for public service, and the Court would be well-served by her appointment as an Associate Judge on the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Kovner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mark Kovner
President
Washington Council of Lawyers