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*Promoting Public-Interest Law and Pro Bono Service*

October 3, 2023

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Via Email

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Mr. Jon S. Bouker

Co-Chair, Norton Federal Law Enforcement Nominating Commission

Re: Letter of Support for Amir Ali, Nominee for Appointment to the United States District Court for the District of Columbia

Dear Mr. Bouker:

Washington Council of Lawyers is very pleased to submit this letter in support of Amir Ali's appointment to the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. It is based upon Mr. Ali's impressive record of dedicated pro bono service and public interest work in addition to his commitment to advocating for the disenfranchised that Washington Council of Lawyers submits this letter of support to the Federal Law Enforcement Nominating Commission to consider Mr. Ali for appointment to this position.

Washington Council of Lawyers is the public-interest bar association for the District of Columbia. Our diverse membership includes lawyers from all sectors of the legal community, legal professionals, law students, and others committed to advancing issues important to the public interest legal community. We support strong judicial candidates who have shown a firm commitment to pro bono and public interest law issues and the candidate's personal experience in promoting equal access to justice. Mr. Ali's legal career is consistent with our mission of public and professional service.

During and after law school, Mr. Ali worked in legal positions as both a law clerk and pro bono scholar and his legal journey has always bent toward pro bono, public interest, and access to justice for all. Following back-to-back federal judicial clerkships with the Honorable Raymond C. Fisher on the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and for the Honorable Mr. Justice Marshall Rothstein on the Supreme Court of Canada, Mr. Ali joined Jenner & Block LLP, where he litigated complex commercial cases in federal courts and administrative agencies. While in private practice, he successfully argued a case before the United States Supreme Court, which entitled hundreds of people serving unconstitutional mandatory minimums to new sentences. He also served as lead counsel on a case that successfully overturned the death sentence of an intellectually disabled man.

While working as a commercial litigation attorney, Mr. Ali met a D.C. resident who lived in public housing and was being wrongfully evicted from her home along with her four children and infant grandchild. Mr. Ali took her case pro bono and investigated it personally. Ultimately, he defended her family all the way to trial, at which point the D.C. Housing Authority dismissed its case and

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allowed his client and her family to stay in their home. Mr. Ali also represented a class of Native American farmers who had been systematically discriminated against by the United States Department of Agriculture and numerous indigent individuals who were incarcerated. He averaged over 1,000 hours per year on pro bono work and served on the firm's Diversity and Inclusion Committee and its Pro Bono Committee.

In February 2017, Mr. Ali left private practice and founded the D.C. Office of the MacArthur Justice Center, one of the nation's top civil rights not-for-profit legal organizations, where he dedicated his full-time practice to representing marginalized and under-resourced communities, including victims of civil rights violations, people with disabilities and mental illness, and incarcerated individuals. In December 2021, Mr. Ali assumed the nationwide position of President and Executive Director of the MacArthur Justice Center. In this role, he oversees all the organization's trial and appellate litigation in federal and local courts on behalf of indigent people. He has successfully argued multiple landmark civil rights cases before the United States Supreme Court, has testified before Congress in hearings concerning civil rights issues, was cited as an expert in Senate hearings concerning the need for reform following the murder of George Floyd, and has authored numerous amicus briefs on national issues.

In addition to his extraordinary work securing the freedom of multiple people who were wrongfully convicted, preventing the execution of people with intellectual disability, and serving dozens of clients in poverty seeking to have their basic rights protected, Mr. Ali has devoted countless hours to training the next generation of lawyers. Since January 2019, Mr. Ali has served as Co-Director of the Criminal Justice Appellate Clinic at Harvard Law School, where students assist on cases raising civil rights issues. In August 2023, Mr. Ali became an adjunct professor at the University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law, where he teaches students the evolution of litigation as it advances through the federal legal system, all the way up to the United States Supreme Court. He has also been invited by the Chief Judge of the District Court for the District of Columbia to speak to the court's law clerks and interns about how to have a successful career in public interest.

Mr. Ali's breadth of knowledge and experience, unique perspective as shaped by his personal and professional experiences, and continued commitment to improving the lives of every person he advocates for distinguish him as a worthy candidate for the position of District Judge on the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. Accordingly, Washington Council of Lawyers enthusiastically endorses his application to this position and submits that Mr. Amir Ali is exceptionally qualified to serve in this capacity.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah C. Hill". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "D".

Deborah Cuevas Hill  
President  
Washington Council of Lawyers