



July 20, 2021

United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin, Ranking Member Grassley, and Committee Members:

On behalf of our 1.5 million supporters nationwide, People For the American Way enthusiastically supports the nomination of federal district judge Gustavo Gelpí to the First Circuit Court of Appeals. He is a widely respected and thoughtful jurist with a wide range of experience who will help that court protect the rights of all people.

Judge Gelpí has dedicated most of his legal career to serving the people of Puerto Rico in various ways. After graduating law school, he clerked for federal district judge Juan M. Perez-Gimenez of Puerto Rico. He then spent four years at the Federal Public Defender's Office, where he represented indigent Puerto Ricans accused of crimes but without the means to defend themselves and assert their legal rights.

He then worked as an assistant attorney general for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, where he expanded his work to include both civil and criminal matters. Upon being promoted to solicitor general, he represented Puerto Rico both in Commonwealth courts as well as the First Circuit. He then turned to private practice, spending 18 months at a firm representing corporate clients in commercial litigation.

His widely varied experience and talent prompted the federal district judges of Puerto Rico to ask him to serve as a magistrate judge in 2001. In 2006, he became a district court judge himself with the support of a unanimous Senate, becoming chief judge in 2018. During his many years on the federal bench, he has presided over more than 3,000 cases, and he has written nearly 900 opinions on a range of constitutional and federal statutory issues. For instance, he approved and still oversees what has been called the most comprehensive federal police reform consent decree in the United States, reining in constitutional abuses by the Puerto Rico Police Department.

Judge Gelpí is also the author of *The Constitutional Evolution of Puerto Rico and Other U.S. Territories 1898–Present*. In this book, he provides readers with a comparative perspective of the status and evolution of Puerto Rico and other United States territories. He has a deep understanding of Puerto Rico's complex relationship with the rest of the United States and of the ways that being a territory affects the constitutional rights of the Americans who live there.

Judge Gelpí is highly qualified for elevation to the First Circuit, and we urge the Senate to confirm him.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marge Baker". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Marge Baker
Executive Vice President