



March 4, 2013

United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the hundreds of thousands of members of People For the American Way, we write to express our strong support for the confirmation of Caitlin Halligan to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. With a fourth seat on this 11-member court becoming vacant, the urgency of confirming Halligan becomes even more pressing.

Caitlin Halligan is supremely qualified with a broad level of support in the legal, women's and law enforcement communities. Currently the General Counsel for the Manhattan District Attorney's Office, she also spent six years serving as New York State's Solicitor General. She is a nationally respected litigator who has earned the ABA's highest possible evaluation of her qualifications.

Her career shows that she recognizes that protecting individuals, their families, and their entire communities requires not only tough prosecution, but tough prosecution done fairly. So while she shares management responsibility for the Manhattan DA's Special Victims Bureau (which prosecutes those involved in child abuse, rape, domestic violence, and elder abuse), she also has been instrumental in the DA's Conviction Integrity Program, which seeks to prevent and correct wrongful convictions.

Her nomination has the support of numerous law enforcement individuals and organizations, including Robert Morgenthau (former DA of Manhattan), Raymond Flynn (New York City's Police Commissioner), the National District Attorneys Association, the New York State Sheriffs' Association, the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police, and New York Women in Law Enforcement.

The best judges understand keenly how the law affects ordinary people. Halligan has worked to help economically disadvantaged families throughout her career. Even before law school, she worked at Georgians for Children, a statewide public policy organization that focuses on issues related to impoverished children and families. Over the years, she has engaged in pro bono work and community service projects that focus on families with the greatest needs. For example, she represented victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita who were at risk of losing their housing assistance.

In its 120-year history, the DC Circuit has had a grand total of five women judges. Halligan clerked for the first of those, trailblazer Patricia Wald, and she would be the sixth if confirmed. The National Conference of Women's Bar Associations, the Women's Bar Association of the District of Columbia, the National Center for Women and Policing, and the U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce are just some of the women's organizations that are supporting her nomination.

Halligan has received the highest possible rating of her qualifications from a unanimous panel of the ABA's nonpartisan Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary. She has also received the strong support of a bipartisan group of renowned appellate advocates, including Miguel Estrada (Assistant to

the Solicitor General under President George W. Bush and former nominee to this same court), Seth Waxman (Solicitor General under President Clinton), Carter Phillips (Assistant to the Solicitor General under President Reagan), and Walter Dellinger (Solicitor General under President Clinton).

A nominee with such sterling credentials and strong support from a broad range of the legal community is exactly the kind of mainstream, talented, and fair jurist we need on the federal bench.

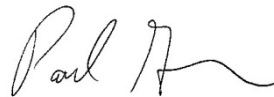
The seat to which Halligan has been nominated has been vacant since 2005. In fact, the 11-member DC Circuit has lost three additional active judges since 2008. None of those judges has been replaced. Not surprisingly, this has had a serious impact on the caseload for the judges who are left. The Senate's confirmation of George W. Bush nominee Thomas Griffith to the eleventh seat in 2005 resulted in there being approximately 121 pending cases per active judge. When the Senate debated Halligan's nomination in 2011, that number had climbed to about 146 pending cases per active judge. Last month, with Judge Sentelle taking senior status, that number has now increased to about 188 cases per active judge, according to the most recent data on pending cases made available by the Administrative Office of U.S. Courts.

Caitlin Halligan has excelled throughout her career. With yet another vacancy opening up on the DC Circuit just last month, the need for someone of her caliber on the bench is greater than ever before. Her nomination deserves a vote on the Senate floor, and she should be confirmed to the DC Circuit.

Sincerely,



Marge Baker  
Executive Vice President for Policy and Program



Paul Gordon  
Senior Legislative Counsel