

February 28, 2011

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy and Ranking Member Grassley:

We write as former clerkship colleagues of Caitlin Halligan in support of her nomination for a seat on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. All of us worked alongside Caitlin as law clerks at the U.S. Supreme Court during the 1997-98 Term. Our shared experience left us with an indelible impression of Caitlin's brilliant legal mind, her collegiality and fair-mindedness, and her abiding respect for the rule of law. Even now, almost a decade and a half later, as we have moved on to disparate careers in the government, private sector, and the legal academy, we retain a distinct appreciation of Caitlin's sharp intelligence and her ability to cooperate with others in resolving difficult legal problems.

As you well know, the work of the Supreme Court is intense and eclectic, encompassing a vast array of intricate legal matters, a host of overlapping deadlines, and a variety of formal and informal procedures for internal deliberation and discussion among the Justices and their clerks. Our work on the difficult cases the Court decided during the 1997-98 Term generated among our group an unending discussion of legal issues, both in connection with our specific law clerk tasks and in more freewheeling conversations in the clerks' dining room and related settings. In this milieu Caitlin stood

out for her ability to meaningfully discuss and explicate tough legal questions with an open mind and a willingness to consider multiple perspectives on the law. Throughout the year, Caitlin displayed a keen ability to listen to and accommodate the views of others, all the while simultaneously expressing and justifying her own view of the law. Although the Court during the 1997 Term issued an unusually high proportion of unanimous decisions, Caitlin's demeanor as a law clerk exuded reasonableness and collegiality even in those areas where we law clerks – and the Justices for whom we worked – disagreed.

In sum, we hold Caitlin Halligan in high regard as a talented and fair-minded colleague who was a pleasure to work with in a sophisticated and demanding legal setting. We have no doubt that if she is confirmed by the Senate, her colleagues on the federal bench will soon arrive at a similar conclusion, and we appreciate your attention to her nomination.

Respectfully submitted,

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