September 10, 2013

Senator Patrick Leahy, Chairman
United States Senate
Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Charles Grassley, Ranking Member
United States Senate
Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Nomination of Judge Robert Wilkins to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit

Dear Senators Leahy and Grassley:

On behalf of the National Women’s Law Center (the “Center”), an organization that has worked since 1972 to advance and protect women’s legal rights, we write in unqualified support of the nomination of Judge Robert Wilkins to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

We believe that Judge Wilkins, currently serving on the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, is extremely well-qualified to serve on this important court. Judge Wilkins graduated from the Rose Hulman Institute of Technology, cum laude, with a degree in chemical engineering, and received his law degree from Harvard Law School, where he served as the Executive Editor of the Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review. After graduating from law school, Judge Wilkins clerked for the Honorable Earl B. Gilliam of the United States District Court for the Southern District of California. He subsequently joined D.C.’s Public Defender Service (“PDS”), first as a staff attorney, and later as head of the Special Litigation division. At PDS, he tried hundreds of cases before the Superior Court of the District of Columbia and also argued numerous cases before the D.C. Circuit. After working for over a decade as a public defender, he joined the law firm Venable LLP as a partner, where he specialized in white collar defense, intellectual property, and complex civil litigation.

We note that Judge Wilkins spent a significant portion of his career in public service, and that he devoted thousands of hours to pro bono work on civil rights, child custody, asylum, Social Security benefit denial, and other cases, while in private practice. In addition to his pro bono and public service, Judge Wilkins has contributed significant
time and effort to community service throughout his career. For example, he was instrumental in establishing the National Museum of African American History and Culture, including by serving on the bipartisan Presidential Planning Commission, and spent years dedicated to this historic project. The museum will open in 2015.

Judge Wilkins’ current position on the United States District Court for the District of Columbia is only the latest accomplishment in his impressive legal career. Based on his outstanding record, he was unanimously confirmed to the District Court by the Senate in 2010, and has served with distinction on that court ever since. Judge Wilkins received a unanimous “Well-Qualified” rating from the ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary, both for his nomination to the district court and for his current nomination to the D.C. Circuit.

Judge Robert Wilkins possesses outstanding qualifications, and is further distinguished by his significant public service and civic leadership. The Center offers its unqualified support for the nomination of Judge Wilkins to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit and urges you to support his nomination. If you have questions or if we can be of assistance, please contact us at (202) 588-5180.

Sincerely,

Nancy Duff Campbell
Co-President

Marcia D. Greenberger
Co-President

Cc.: Judiciary Committee