Yale Law School

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Senator Patrick Leahy
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC

Dear Senator Leahy:

I am writing to urge the confirmation of John G. Roberts as a Judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. I have had the privilege of having some firsthand experience with Mr. Roberts that may shed light on his nomination. I believe him to be the very finest advocate I have ever seen before the Court, and a man of the highest integrity.

I know Mr. Roberts quite well because I worked with him for three months on a daily basis after I graduated from law school. Before accepting employment with his law firm, Hogan & Hartson, I asked Mr. Roberts whether he would be comfortable taking me–a Democratic young lawyer–under his wing. His response: "Not only would I be comfortable with it, I want you here because I want to learn what others who may at times see the world differently than I think." Over the years, I have often come back in my mind to Mr. Roberts' response, as an aspiration for me to strive towards and as an example for my students. It was evident to me when he said it, and clear in the subsequent months, that his statement was sincerely heartfelt. Over those months, I was treated with respect and care as we worked through several extraordinarily complicated legal issues together. Mr. Roberts has always sought out different points of view, and has avoided the trap that most of us at one time or another fall into, of just talking to those with whom we feel most comfortable. These skills, among others, make him, quite simply, the most talented lawyer with whom I have ever worked. He is careful and honest, a beautiful writer and a kind manager to boot.

In the 100 or so Supreme Court arguments I have seen, John has been the best advocate I have ever come across. The reason why is simple: he is remarkably honest with the Court. He does not try to hide the caselaw on the other side of his position, rather, he confronts it directly and with skill. I believe very strongly that he would act no differently as a lower court judge, and that he would approach judicial precedent with the honesty and the care with which it is due. For the above reasons, I would have no hesitation whatsoever in recommending any student of mine – liberal or conservative – to clerk for him. He would quite simply be one of the top handful of judges in the country, not simply in terms of sheer intelligence, but also in terms of disposition.

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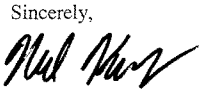
In short, I believe that John Roberts has the integrity, temperament, and brilliance to be one of the finest judges to have ever served on the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. I urge you to begin the process of confirming him.

Sincerely,



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