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April 21, 2021

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Re: APALA-NJ Endorsement of the Honorable Zahid N. Quraishi, U.S.M.J. to the District Court for the District of New Jersey

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Chairman Durbin, and Ranking Member Grassley:

The Asian Pacific American Lawyers Association of New Jersey (APALA-NJ) unequivocally supports the confirmation of U.S. Magistrate Judge Zahid N. Quraishi to the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey. Once confirmed, Judge Quraishi will be the first Muslim-American in our country and the first Asian-American in the District of New Jersey to serve as an Article III Judge.

The Judicial Conference of the United States has declared a judicial emergency with respect to the backlog of cases and judicial vacancies in our state, which is also one of the busiest districts. As of September 30, 2020, more than 46,000 cases were pending in New Jersey federal courts, which means 2,742 cases per judge if there were no vacancies, but New Jersey has six vacancies currently and a caseload that is well over three times the national average. Undeniably, New Jersey's federal bench is understaffed and New Jerseyans are in desperate need of judges to

fill these vacancies. Judge Quraishi is exceptionally qualified to be elevated to serve as a district judge to work towards alleviating this backlog.

In June 2019, Judge Quraishi became the first Muslim/Asian-American to serve on the federal court in our district as a magistrate judge. He has proven himself a dedicated and exceptional jurist on the federal bench. Judge Quraishi's unwavering dedication to excellence in the practice of law and service to the profession goes beyond the courthouse gates. He presently serves as an ambassador of the Court and regularly serves as a panelist and engages in outreach with federal, state, and affinity bar associations. He also endeavors to educate aspiring attorneys as an adjunct professor at Rutgers Law School, instructing law students on trial presentation.

Judge Quraishi has had an extensive career both in the public and private sector before becoming a judge. A Rutgers Law School graduate, events of 9/11 influenced Judge Quraishi to leave his lucrative career in the private sector and to join the US Army JAG Corps in 2002, where he was deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2004 and 2006. Judge Quraishi achieved the rank of Captain before his honorable discharge.


Following his military service, Judge Quraishi returned to New Jersey to serve as a trial counsel for the Department of Homeland Security, followed by a career in the United States Attorney's Office. Prior to his appointment to the federal bench as a magistrate judge, Judge Quraishi was Chair of Riker Danzig Scherer Hyland & Perretti LLP's White Collar Criminal Defense and Investigations Group and the firm's first Chief Diversity Officer.

Judge Quraishi's confirmation would advance diversity in the United States District Court, District Court of New Jersey, which does not currently adequately reflect the entire constituency of New Jersey, 10% of whom are of Asian descent. We are confident that Judge Quraishi will bring the same level of dedication and success once confirmed as a District Judge. Without reservation, APALA-NJ highly endorses Judge Quraishi's candidacy as a United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey.

If APALA-NJ may be of any further assistance with regards to Judge Quraishi's candidacy, please do not hesitate to contact us directly: Qing H. Guo, Esq. | Work No: (973) 549-2524 | Email: qguo@grsm.com. We look forward to continuing our work together to achieve our common goal of diversity and excellence in our judiciary.

Sincerely,

THE ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY

By: 
QING H. GUO, ESQ.
President-Elect, APALA-NJ
Member, APALA-NJ Judicial & Prosecutorial Appointments Committee

c: Senator Cory Booker (via email only)
Honorable Zahid N. Quraishi, U.S.M.J. (via email only)