

July 13, 2021



**SUPPORT THE CONFIRMATION OF LAUREN KING TO THE
U.S. DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON**

Dear Senator:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition of more than 220 national organizations committed to promoting and protecting the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States, we write to express our strong support for the confirmation of Lauren King to the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington.

Ms. King's commitment to civil rights and her significant experience in tribal law make her well qualified to serve in this role. For nearly 10 years, she has been an attorney at Foster Garvey PC, where she now chairs the firm's Native American Law Practice Group. Her practice involves treaty rights cases, protection of sacred sites, commercial and intellectual property disputes, and advising Native American tribes on regulatory issues. Since 2013, Ms. King has also served as a pro tem appellate judge with the Northwest Intertribal Court System. After graduating from the University of Washington and the University of Virginia Law School, Ms. King served as an associate for K&L Gates LLP and Byrnes Keller Cromwell LLP. She has served her community in a number of ways, including as a commissioner for the Mvskoke Reservation Protection Commission and board member of the Seattle Indian Health Board. She has also chaired the Indian Law Section of the Washington State Bar Association and served on the board of the Northwest Tribal Court Judges Association. Ms. King's extensive and varied experience will make her an asset to the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington.

In addition, Ms. King's lived experience would bring important perspectives to the federal bench. Ms. King is a citizen of the Muscogee Nation, and Native Americans are vastly underrepresented in the federal judiciary. More than 3,800 people have served as Article III judges, but only five have been Native American.¹ If confirmed, Ms. King would be the first Native American federal judge to serve in the state of Washington.² Washington is home to more than 225,000 Native Americans;³ it is crucial that judges share characteristics and experiences with the people impacted by their decisions. This helps foster public trust in the courts, better jurisprudence that is more reflective of a diverse nation, and improved judicial decision-making.⁴ Ms. King's expertise and understanding of tribal law will also serve this jurisdiction well. The judiciary needs to reflect both demographic diversity and the experiential diversity

¹ "[Biographical Directory of Article III Federal Judges, 1789-present](#)." *Federal Judicial Center*. Accessed July 2021. Search includes all current and former Article III federal judges whose race or ethnicity includes American Indian.

² *Id.* Search includes all current and former Article III federal judges who served in Washington and whose race or ethnicity includes American Indian.

³ "[2019 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates](#)." *United States Census Bureau*. Accessed July 2021. Search includes Washington residents who identify as American Indian or Alaska Native.

⁴ Sen, Maya. "[Diversity, Qualifications, and Ideology: How Female and Minority Judges Have Changed, or Not Changed, Over Time](#)." 2017 *Wis. L. Rev.* 367 (2017).

of the legal profession, including more judges experienced in ensuring that people's rights are protected and defended. Ms. King would bring this much-needed diversity and meaningful experience to the federal bench.

Ms. King's vast experience, especially in the area of tribal law, is an essential perspective that is needed on the federal bench. We urge the Senate to confirm Lauren King to the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter further, please contact Lena Zwarenstejn, Senior Director of the Fair Courts Campaign, at (202) 466-3311. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Wade Henderson
Interim President & CEO



Jesselyn McCurdy
Interim Executive Vice President of Government Affairs