

January 23, 2023



**SUPPORT THE CONFIRMATION OF JUDGE MARGARET GUZMAN
TO THE U.S. DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS**

Dear Senator:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition of more than 230 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 Judge Margaret Guzman to the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts. The Leadership Conference intends to include your position on the confirmation of Judge Guzman in our voting record for the 118th Congress.

Judge Guzman's commitment to equal justice and years of distinguished public service make her a wonderful choice for the District of Massachusetts. Since 2017, Judge Guzman has served as the first justice for the Ayer District Court. Prior to this, she was an associate justice for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Trial Court. Before her judicial service, Judge Guzman worked as a Criminal Justice Act panel attorney with Defender Services for the U.S District Court and a trial attorney in the Public Defender Division of the Committee for Public Counsel Services. She also spent four years as a solo practitioner specializing in criminal defense. Additionally, Judge Guzman trained future lawyers and current judges as an instructor at Harvard Law School and the National Judicial College. Judge Guzman is a graduate of Clark University and Boston University Law School. Her experience administering fair and impartial justice will make her an excellent addition to the federal bench.

Judge Guzman is eminently qualified to serve on the district court, and her commitment to pursuing equal justice for all people will benefit our federal judiciary. Throughout her 13 years as a public defender with the Committee for Public Counsel Services, she represented clients who could not afford an attorney and helped them navigate the complex criminal-legal system. She continued to focus on criminal defense matters when she opened her own solo practice, while also serving as court-appointed counsel for people unable to pay for legal services as a member of the Criminal Justice Act panel. Judge Guzman would bring important professional experience to our federal judiciary, which currently lacks judges with experience that public defenders and criminal defense lawyers possess. Until 2014, no public defender had ever been confirmed to the District of Massachusetts.¹ If confirmed, Judge Guzman would be only the second to ever serve on this court.² Her career has been dedicated to making sure people have access to counsel, which is a much-needed perspective that would greatly benefit the federal judiciary.

¹ [Biographical Directory of Article III Federal Judges, 1789-present](#), FEDERAL JUDICIAL CENTER (Accessed November 2022).

² *Id.*

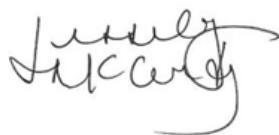
If confirmed, Judge Guzman would be the first Latina to ever sit on this court.³ Nearly 900,000 adults in Massachusetts identify as Hispanic or Latino,⁴ yet there has never been a Hispanic or Latino judge on this federal district court.⁵ The judiciary makes decisions that affect the lives of all people and should therefore reflect the diversity of our country. Indeed, public trust in the judiciary is reinforced when our federal bench better reflects the community it serves, and this trust is crucial to the courts' function.⁶ A diversity of professional and lived experiences on the federal bench also improves judicial decision-making.⁷ The District of Massachusetts would be well served by the addition of Judge Guzman.

Judge Guzman is an excellent choice for this position, and we strongly urge the Senate to confirm her to the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact Lena Zwarensteyn, senior director of the fair courts program, at (202) 466-3311. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Maya Wiley
President & CEO



Jesselyn McCurdy
Executive Vice President of Government Affairs

³ *Id.*

⁴ [Quick Facts: Massachusetts](#), THE U.S. CENSUS BUREAU (accessed November 2022).

⁵ [Biographical Directory of Article III Federal Judges, 1789-present](#), FEDERAL JUDICIAL CENTER (Accessed November 2022).

⁶ Maya Sen, [Diversity, Qualifications, and Ideology: How Female and Minority Judges Have Changed, or Not Changed, Over Time](#), WIS. L. REV. 367 (2017).

⁷ Kate Berry, [Building a Diverse Bench: Selecting Federal Magistrate and Bankruptcy Judges](#), BRENNAN CENTER FOR JUSTICE AT NYU SCHOOL OF LAW AND AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION JUDICIAL DIVISION (2017).