



National  
Congress of  
American  
Indians



NATIVE AMERICAN RIGHTS FUND

March 28, 2022

The Honorable Richard Durbin  
*Chairman*  
U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Grassley  
*Ranking Member*  
U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary  
Washington, DC 20510

**RE: Support for the Confirmation of Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to the U.S. Supreme Court**

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

On behalf of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and the Native American Rights Fund (NARF), we write to strongly urge the U.S. Senate to promptly vote to confirm U.S. Supreme Court nominee Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson.

Federal judges frequently make decisions that have lasting and resounding impacts for Tribal Nations and millions of tribal citizens. Due to this reality, NCAI and NARF, through our joint Project on the Judiciary, have long called for the appointment of federal court judges who are tribal citizens and those who demonstrate an understanding of tribal sovereignty and federal Indian law.

While Justice Jackson has limited experience in federal Indian law, she has expressly acknowledged the “sovereign-to-sovereign relationship” between the United States and Indian tribes and “special trust relationship between Indian tribes and the federal government.” We hope Judge Jackson continues to build on this understanding, especially with the several cases that are coming before the U.S. Supreme Court next term that will impact Tribal Nations. It is critical that Supreme Court justices understand the political status of Tribal Nations and the unique context, history, and application of federal Indian law to support tribal government sovereignty. We welcome the opportunity to further support this engagement and education.

What is clear from Judge Jackson’s judicial record and Senate Judiciary hearing is that she is eminently qualified, a person of the utmost integrity, and incredibly respected by her colleagues and peers. Further, her educational and professional backgrounds will add additional perspectives to the highest court in the United States which are essential to ensuring that we have a court that understands and represents the wide spectrum of the legal profession. As potentially the first Black woman to serve on the Supreme Court, Justice Jackson’s voice will be uniquely hers, but it will

also serve to diversify the experiences and viewpoints of an institution whose decisions affect millions of Americans daily.

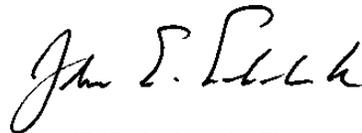
Based on her qualifications, integrity, and respect she has throughout the legal profession, we believe that Judge Jackson is uniquely qualified to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court. Our federal courts and especially the highest court in the United States must be more representative of the governments and people they serve. NCAI and NARF support the nomination of Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson and call for her swift confirmation.

We hope that this historic appointment will continue to open doors for qualified Native American justices across the federal bench and Supreme Court.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'F. Sharp'.

Fawn Sharp, President  
National Congress of American Indians

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John E. Echohawk'.

John E. Echohawk, Executive Director  
Native American Rights Fund

CC: Senator Majority Leader Charles Schumer  
Senator Minority Leader Mitch McConnell