

June 20, 2017

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
United States Senate
1200 Washington Avenue South, #250
Minneapolis, MN 55415

The Honorable Al Franken
United States Senate
60 Plato Boulevard, #220
St. Paul, MN 55107

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
United States Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Diane Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Nomination of Justice David Stras to the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals

Dear Senators:

The undersigned are Minnesota lawyers from all political walks of life who join in respectfully urging the Senate to confirm Justice David Stras's nomination to the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit. (Signatories' affiliations are provided for ease of identification and imply neither endorsement nor lack thereof by the affiliated organization.)

In his seven years as a Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court, Justice Stras has distinguished himself not only as a top-notch jurist, but as a judge who decides cases without regard to political affiliation or party lines. He has sided with both "liberal" and "conservative" Justices during his tenure on the court, always in pursuit of applying the law as it comes to him, without ideology or favoritism.

Justice Stras has also proven to be a collegial and collaborative judge, as three of his former colleagues on the Minnesota Supreme Court (retired Justices Alan Page, Helen Meyer, and Paul Anderson) explained in publicly endorsing him in a recent editorial in the *Minneapolis StarTribune*. ("The case for the nomination of David Stras to the federal courts," June 2, 2017.) This comes as no surprise. After practicing law, Justice Stras came to Minnesota to teach at the University of Minnesota Law School. Just two years later, he was named Stanley V. Kinyon Tenure Track Teacher of the Year. He was such a student favorite that the staff of the *Minnesota Law Review* published a tribute to Justice Stras in their Spring 2011 issue. That tribute included accolades from then-Dean David Wippman as well as former Dean Robert Stein, the latter of whom concluded his remarks by stating that "[t]he citizens of Minnesota *and the entire nation* will be the better for

[Justice Stras's] appointment" to the Minnesota Supreme Court. (Robert A. Stein, *Distinguished Scholar, Dedicated Teacher, and Now Justice: David R. Stras*, 95 Minn. L. Rev. 116, 124 (2011)).

Those of us who have appeared before Justice Stras regard him as a very skilled, polite, engaging, inquisitive, intellectually curious judge who is fair, impartial, and interested in one thing: getting to the right answer under the law. Politics plays no role in arguing a case to Justice Stras. Arguing for a "conservative" result does not help. Only dealing objectively with the law will be effective with Justice Stras.

Justice Stras has all of the qualities of an excellent judge. He is hard-working, intelligent, and open to all views. He would be an outstanding addition to the Eighth Circuit, and we respectfully urge the Judiciary Committee and the Senate to confirm his nomination to the Eighth Circuit.

Sincerely,

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Former Chief Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court

Justice Eric J. Magnuson
Former Chief Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court
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Justice James H. Gilbert
Former Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court
Gilbert Mediation Center, Ltd.

Justice Samuel L. Hanson
Former Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court
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Justice Esther Tomljanovich
Former Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court

Judge Marianne D. Short
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