

CARL LEVIN
MICHIGAN



United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2202

COMMITTEES:
ARMED SERVICES
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
SMALL BUSINESS
INTELLIGENCE

August 25, 2010

Mr. Paul V. Sheridan
22357 Columbia Street
Dearborn, MI 48124-3431

Dear Mr. Sheridan:

Thank you for contacting me regarding my vote to confirm Solicitor General Elena Kagan to be Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. I appreciate hearing your thoughts on this important matter.

Elena Kagan was the thirteenth Supreme Court nomination on which I have voted. Each time, I have reviewed the nominee's qualifications, temperament and background to determine if the nominee is likely to bring to the court an ideology that distorts his or her legal judgment or brings into question his or her open-mindedness. I believe Elena Kagan satisfies the essential requirements of open-mindedness and judicial temperament and her legal opinions have fallen within the mainstream of jurisprudence.

At a time when the discussion of our legal system is too often dominated by ideological labels, Elena Kagan brings years of practical, pragmatic experience to our highest court. I believe her sense of fairness, her keen intellect and her commitment to the rule of law ensure she will be an outstanding justice of the United States Supreme Court. In this belief, I am joined by a bipartisan group of supporters, including Miguel Estrada, Assistant Solicitor General in the George H.W. Bush administration, former Solicitors General Kenneth Starr and Drew S. Days, as well as a number of my Republican colleagues, including Senators Lindsey Graham and Judd Gregg. These voices across the political spectrum recognize Elena Kagan's tremendous qualifications, and value, in the words of Professor Michael McConnell, director of the Constitutional Law Center at Stanford Law School, her "fidelity to legal principle even when it means crossing her political and ideological allies."

The highlights of Elena Kagan's career are well known. She served as a law clerk for Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall and taught at the University of Chicago Law School. In 2003, Elena Kagan was named dean of the Harvard Law School, the first woman to hold that title. As dean, she broadened the school's diversity of legal points of view, strengthened the academic program, and improved the quality of life for students and faculty. Most recently, in 2009, she was the first woman to be nominated by a President and confirmed by the Senate to serve as Solicitor General of the United States. In this position, she represented the interests of the U.S. Government before the Supreme Court and received numerous accolades from a broad range of observers for her work.

Elena Kagan is smart, experienced, learned and fair. On August 5, 2010, she was confirmed by the Senate by a vote of 63 to 37 with my support. I am confident she will make an excellent Justice of the Supreme Court. Thank you again for contacting me.

Sincerely,


Carl Levin

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