

NAZARI LAW

Happy to help.

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Honorable Governor Kate Brown
c/o Benjamin Souede, Esq.
General Counsel
Office of the Governor
160 State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301-4047

Re: Endorsement of Darleen Ortega for elevation to the Supreme Court of Oregon

Honorable Governor Brown,

I write to support the appointment of Judge Ortega to the Oregon Supreme Court. Not only has Judge Ortega proven herself to be a rigorous legal thinker on the Oregon Court of Appeals, but she also demonstrated that her heightened intersectional analysis and continued engagement with Oregon's marginalized communities is the antidote to injustice. She is our first line of defense to strengthen the protections for Oregon's marginalized communities within our state borders, as these communities face a national war waged against them. Her appointment is required to combat the erosion of our hard fought rights.

The US Supreme Court will soon become hostile to those of us at the margins. Our allies at the federal level lack the power to stop the appointment of a US Supreme Court Justice who will dismantle the federal rights that we have fought long and hard for. We need an Oregon Supreme Court with the capacity and analysis to help our state judicial branch preserve and lift our marginalized community members. Judge Ortega publicly shared her analysis around issues of intersectionality as a panel member at City Club's Friday Forum: Feminism at the Intersection. Those of us at the margins have relied and drawn on Judge Ortega's analysis to help us find a foothold as we are inundated with struggle to make our voices heard in the face of wWhite Fragility and Moral Licensing. The appointment of Judge Ortega will ensure

Oregonians the necessary heightened analysis around equity and intersectionality within our Supreme Court.

I write to you as member of the Oregon State Bar, an immigrant, an asyli, a woman, a person of color, an activist, a trial lawyer, a solo firm owner, a leader in my community serving as board member to the Oregon Women Lawyers, and a co-leader with the Oregon chapter of Lawyers For Good Government. I inhabit multiple worlds as I stand at my own intersection.

I am eager to see leadership at our state level with the capacity to acknowledge and embody the realities that I and so many other people like me are subject to. Because I was not endowed with the benefits of white privilege my experience in Oregon as a citizen and a lawyer has not been pleasant. I have been subject to harassment and hate speech. I have been denied access to the protections provided by the state. My needs have been systematically ignored and rebuked. I have been subject to and now work to dismantle the systematic bias that plagues our communities. Still I do not see my elective representatives working to lift my voice as I am drowned out under the wave of the new administrations.

You heard from me and the OWLS community in a previous letter in support of Judge Ortega, dated September 22, 2015, for her appointment to the Oregon Supreme Court. Similarly, you have received eight other letters of support in addition to two publications in the Oregonian highlighting Judge Ortega's extensive contributions to our community and legal system. I will not attempt to co-opt or distill the voices of my community members.¹ Those voices represent real people who are directly impacted by Judge Ortega's good work. I will share with you that no other judge on the bench can exhibit this level of support from marginalized communities. Therefore, Judge Ortega stands out as the only candidate to bring with her our voices.

We require intersectional representation to combat the racist bigoted war waged against us. We require a judiciary that can hear and see us. All of us. Not just the privileged. We require Judge Ortega on the Oregon Supreme Court. Judge Ortega has developed a depth and

¹ Letter of Support for Judge Ortega from PCUN, September 11, 2015, local attorneys, September 14, 2015 current and former extern of Judge Ortega, September 15, 2015, Oregon Court of Appeals Law Clerks, September 15, 2015, Roosevelt High School Teacher, September 15, 2015, Portland Observer, September 16, 2015, LGBTQ Community, New woman lawyers, September 28, 2015, Oregon Women Lawyers Past Presidents and Board members, September 22, 2015, Gilbert Paul Carrasco, An opportunity to increase diversity on Oregon's top court (OPINION), Oregonlive, November 16, 2015, Andria Costillo, Oregonlive, Darleen Ortega, raised near Banks, becomes Oregon's first Latina Court of Appeals judge, January 2, 2014.

breadth of community connection by venturing beyond her own intersection to forge relationships within our communities statewide. Her ongoing efforts have done what our judicial branch has yet to accomplish. A connection with the marginalized citizens of our state. A grassroots understanding of community struggles to place an appropriate check on our system and bring us into balance. We the marginalized require leadership that understands and actively listens to us.

As our country is being taken apart piece by piece, we require leadership with an exacting critique of injustice. We need a judiciary that is tuned in to the struggles of community members. We need Judge Ortega on our Supreme Court bench.

Please contact me with further questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Banafsheh Violet Nazari". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a prominent initial "B".

Banafsheh Violet Nazari

Attorney at Law