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February 15, 2021

Co-Chairs Pauline Schneider & Jon Bouker
Federal Law Enforcement Nominating Commission
Arent Fox LLP
1717 K Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20006
DCFLENC@arentfox.com

Re: Endorsement of Magistrate Judge Zia Faruqui for Vacancy on United States District Court for the District of Columbia

Dear Ms. Schneider & Mr. Bouker:

On behalf of the South Asian Bar Association of Washington, D.C. (“SABA-DC”), I write to express our unequivocal support for the potential appointment of Zia Mustafa Faruqui, Magistrate Judge of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia (the “D.C. District Court”), to fill the current District Judge vacancy on that Court. Through his extensive experience as a federal prosecutor and a magistrate judge—with a particular focus on the types of cases of critical national importance that are often seen in the District of Columbia’s federal courts—Judge Faruqui would add a unique perspective to the Court and continue a lengthy history of public service.

SABA-DC is a voluntary bar association dedicated to the needs, concerns, and interests of the South Asian American legal community in the Washington, D.C. area. The organization reaches approximately 1,000 attorneys and jurists of South Asian origin in the D.C. metropolitan area. SABA-DC’s key objectives are to advance the professional development of South Asian American lawyers, increase awareness and dialogue regarding legal issues concerning South Asian Americans, and improve access to legal services for the South Asian American community. In making our endorsements, we consider a candidate’s experience, past accomplishments, demonstrated interest in or commitment to the South Asian community, and broader efforts to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion in the legal profession.



Based on his extensive personal and professional accomplishments, SABA-DC strongly believes that Judge Faruqi is immensely qualified to be elevated to the role of a District Judge on the D.C. District Court bench. As a devoted public servant with nearly two decades of experience in federal courts, Judge Faruqi has demonstrated an enduring passion for facilitating the judicial resolution of the ever-evolving challenges facing the United States economy. He began his legal career as an Associate at Wilkie Farr & Gallagher LLP before joining the United States Attorney’s Office—first in St. Louis and then in Washington, D.C. In line with his passion for public service, Judge Faruqi spent 12 years as an Assistant United States Attorney, including the past 10 years in the District of Columbia. In this role, Judge Faruqi specialized in prosecuting civil and criminal matters involving national security, financial crime, and cybercrime. He continues to serve as a leading voice in these areas, sharing his expertise by giving presentations to attorneys both throughout the United States and internationally. Though he is an expert in economic crime, Judge Faruqi brings a wealth of experience across the full spectrum of civil and criminal legal issues that come before the D.C. District Court. Perhaps most indicative of his aptitude and suitability for the role of District Judge is that Judge Faruqi was selected for his current role by a panel of D.C. District Court Judges with whom he has served since September of 2020.

Judge Faruqi has also been a proud and engaged resident in our nation’s capital for over 20 years. He met his wife and chose to raise his family here. He actively serves the community and has endeavored to ameliorate hardship facing District residents. Since 2006, Judge Faruqi has served on the Board of Jobs for Homeless People, a non-profit organization dedicated to serving homeless D.C. residents from communities of color by placing them in safe housing and providing pathways to stable employment.

Equally important to his professional and voluntary experience, however, is the rich and diverse perspective that Judge Faruqi would bring to the Court through his personal life experience. As the son of Pakistani immigrants, Judge Faruqi grew up aspiring to give back to the country that allowed his family to build a safe and stable life. It is this background that underpins his lifelong commitment to federal public service. He is also a passionate advocate for diversity and inclusion. As a dedicated member of several affinity bar organizations, including SABA-DC, Judge Faruqi regularly mentors minority students and speaks on panels focused on improving access to the judiciary and the legal community at large. As the first Muslim to be appointed to the federal bench in the District of Columbia, Judge Faruqi has brought to the Court representation and understanding of communities that have long been underrepresented and even vilified in recent years. His credentials would help the D.C. District Court continue to build trust with underrepresented communities in the District and nationwide. Representation truly matters, and Judge Faruqi’s background would undoubtedly enhance the diversity of the D.C. District Court bench.



Based on the information highlighted in this letter, combined with the extensive materials you have received regarding his qualifications, SABA-DC believes that Judge Faruqi is an exceptional candidate for the District Judge vacancy on the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. We enthusiastically support him for this position and respectfully request that you extend him every possible consideration for inclusion in the group of nominations sent to the President for consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Sidhu', is positioned below the word 'Sincerely,'.

Amandeep S. Sidhu
Chairman, SABA-DC Endorsements Committee

cc: Priya L. Bhanu, President, SABA-DC
Nandu Machiraju, President-Elect, SABA-DC