

Sen. Nader Hashim
Chair
Vermont State Senate Judiciary Committee
c/o Vermont State Senate
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-5301
Dear Senator Hashim,

I am writing in reference to the Senate Judiciary Committee's consideration of Christina Nolan for the position of Associate Justice on the Vermont Supreme Court. I strongly support Ms. Nolan's candidacy for this position.

I am very familiar with Ms. Nolan and her skills and attributes related to this position.

I am an attorney, with almost forty years of experience. For the last 19 years, from 2006 through the end of July 2025, I was the head of the Federal Public Defender Office for the District of Vermont. That office represents the majority of people charged with crimes in federal court. I managed the office and also represented clients myself. I handled many cases in which Ms. Nolan was the federal prosecutor; that is, the "opposing attorney." In all those cases I found Ms. Nolan to be fair, trustworthy, intelligent, respectful, and interested in achieving a just resolution.

When Ms. Nolan was the United States Attorney for the District of Vermont, I had many dealings with her as lead two, essentially adversarial, offices. In all those dealings I found that Ms. Nolan demonstrated the same fairness, intelligence, etc., evident in her work as an Assistant U.S. Attorney. And further, she was always open for discussion on differences of opinion, and never narrow or dogmatic in her approach. As I saw it, the U.S. Attorney General and the Justice Department (in Washington, D.C.) did become harsh, and rather dogmatic about prosecution policies, during Ms. Nolan's time as the U.S. Attorney. Somehow, with skill and deftness, Ms. Nolan was able to maintain the civil, respectful, just, "Vermont Way" in prosecutions brought by her office, despite the harsh directives from "Main Justice."

I also know Ms. Nolan in her role as a criminal defense attorney. She is on the Criminal Justice Act panel, a group of highly experienced attorneys who are asked by federal court judges to represent people in federal court in Vermont. I have seen that she is a very determined, skilled, and effective advocate for criminal defendants, particularly those who are indigent and cannot afford to hire retained lawyers. And I am also aware that Ms. Nolan practiced criminal defense while in the Goodwin Proctor law firm in Boston, Massachusetts and was very highly regarded in that time, also. In fact, her work there included working with the very respected Innocence Project.

As a citizen of Vermont and as an attorney, I would feel very confident in knowing that Christina E. Nolan was on the Vermont Supreme Court. Michael Desautels

Michael L. Desautels