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August 11, 2023

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Re: JC 2 Consideration and Confirmation to the District Court of the First Circuit,  
Judicial Nominee Robert J. Brown

Hearing: Monday, August 21, 2023, Conference Room 016 & Videoconference

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

I am writing to express my unconditional support for Robert J. Brown's consideration and confirmation to serve as a judge in the District Court of the First Circuit.

I have known Mr. Brown for many years. We graduated from the same class at the William S. Richardson School of Law and I am privileged to say that we have remained good friends. Mr. Brown has always been one of the most fair and ethical people I know. It is no small thing to note that Mr. Brown served at the prosecutor's office during a time of immense turmoil and a serious betrayal of the public's trust and still, unfailingly and without hesitation, committed to "doing the right thing", and has continued to do so in his career in private practice.

Mr. Brown's willingness to listen and consider alternative viewpoints, along with his even temper and genuine nature, make him an exemplary candidate for a judgeship. He and I are fairly far apart on the political scale – I am wildly liberal and he is more traditionally conservative (in the true meaning of the word before the current national Republican Party debased it). However, that has never stopped Mr. Brown from listening to my "side" of the argument and engaging in thoughtful and considerate discourse. He always seeks to listen and to understand, and often insists he's better for having had those discussions – and truth be told, I am too.

Finally, Mr. Brown is a family man whose passion to serve and be a role model for his sons has driven him for many years and I am thrilled to see he is finally within striking distance of being able to bring his time and talents to serve the people of Hawaii. It is a position that requires a true heart of service, and I know that is, without a doubt, what Mr. Brown will bring to the judiciary

I strongly believe that Mr. Brown is eminently qualified to serve as a judge and fully support his confirmation. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me at (808) 528-8236 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Kimi Ide-Foster

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/12/2023 8:14:13 AM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Macklin Kekoia Sandison	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments: Dear Committee Members , I am writing to express my strong support for the nomination of Robert J. Brown (RJ) to fill one of the vacancies in the District Court of the First Circuit Court (Island of Oahu). Specifically I would like to speak to his personal character and judicial temperament. I have known RJ since we both started attending Punahou as Freshmen in 2000. While at Punahou, we were on the wrestling team together and have been friends ever since. Since I have known him, RJ has demonstrated a sense of compassion, empathy, and degree of people skills that stands out amongst his peers. RJ has a unique ability to bring people around him together and create meaningful relationships and a sense of community where it might otherwise not exist. He has one of the strongest work ethics of anyone I know, and is a natural leader. While at Punahou, he was chosen as Team Captain of the football team. He was a walk on to the football team at CU Boulder, and despite being relatively small for division 1 football, was selected as Special Teams Captain and Second Team All American in his senior year. RJ also has a history of compassion for others and community service going back to his highschool days where he was an active member, and eventually President of the "Meat Club". In that role, he recruited members and organized weekly community service activities ranging from beach clean ups, stream clean ups and native plant restoration, to donation drives and direct work with the Honolulu Institute for Human Services. Since then, he has been active with Big Brothers Big Sisters Hawai'i as well. Thank you very much for your consideration on this matter. I look forward to lending my support in person on the 21st, if you have any questions. Respectfully, Macklin K. Sandison cell: 808-381-3599

Cheuk Fu Lui  
[CF.Lui@outlook.com](mailto:CF.Lui@outlook.com)

Before the Senate Committee on Judiciary

On Measure JC2 –

Confirmation of Judicial Nominee Robert J. Brown to the District Court of the First Circuit – **Testimony in Strong Support**

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee:

I write in **STRONG SUPPORT** for the confirmation of Robert J. Brown (“RJ”) to the District Court of the First Circuit.

RJ is an extremely competent and diligent attorney. I’ve had the pleasure of working alongside RJ as teammates when we were both deputy prosecutors. Our relationship developed quickly from professional to a close personal one. I’m honored to be able to call RJ one of my best friends. As a practitioner, RJ is professional, intelligent, and dedicated. RJ holds himself to a very high ethical standard. RJ will do what is right, every time, even when no one is looking. As a personal friend, RJ is one who truly can be relied and counted on.

RJ is well-qualified to serve on the District Court of the First Circuit, as he has proven so during his time as a per diem judge. He has been an outstanding and well-respected attorney, who consistently exhibits professionalism and well-temperament. I have no doubt in my mind that as a Judge, RJ will make just and fair decisions, and that he will be unbiased and impartial.

A judge should be temperate, impartial, diligent, and hardworking. RJ possesses each of those traits. RJ has all the credentials and qualities to be a fine Judge. Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide my comments.

Respectfully,



Cheuk Fu Lui

August 14, 2023

**SENATOR KARL RHOADS**, Chair  
**SENATOR MIKE GABBARD**, Vice Chair  
Committee on Judiciary  
Thirty-Second Legislature, interim of 2023

*RE: JC2: Testimony in support of Judicial Nominee Robert J. Brown*

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Committee Members:

I write to submit my testimony in strong support of the Honorable Mark E. Recktenwald's appointment of Robert J. Brown ("Mr. Brown") to fill a judicial position in the District Court of the First Circuit.

Briefly, I take this opportunity to highlight a unique aspect of Mr. Brown, whom I came to know well through my practice as a former Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for the City and County of Honolulu for nearly a decade, which may not be readily apparent.

What I respect most about Mr. Brown, whom I count as a very close friend, was that when we were faced with scenarios at the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney that were open to professional discretion (*e.g.*, plea negotiations), the very first question he would always ask himself was "What is the right thing to do".

Mr. Brown took the public trust he was given as a deputy prosecutor solemnly to heart and strove to exercise his judgment critically and carefully in each case assigned to him. I sincerely believe that in situations as a judge where professional discretion will be needed, to complement or supplement legal precedent, Mr. Brown's immediate concern about doing the right thing is an indispensable and admirable quality.

I can assure the Committee, that Mr. Brown is a man without any guile within. This is a reputation he has amongst his legal peers, both prosecutors and defense attorneys. His rulings will therefore necessarily carry honesty and trustworthiness to them, and give those appearing before him assured confidence in his impartiality. Respect for the law is encouraged by judges who command the same, and Mr. Brown will in time be the finest example of such a maxim.

I have no reservations about the quality of his character, nor the depth of his legal aptitude, to serve our legal community and state in a judicial capacity. I offer him my full support throughout this process toward confirmation.

Respectfully and unreservedly,



Kyle T. Dowd  
[kyle.timothy.dowd@gmail.com](mailto:kyle.timothy.dowd@gmail.com)

Monday, August 21, 2023, 9:00 A.M.

State of Hawai‘i

Senate Committee on Judiciary  
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

**TESTIMONY OF ERIC S. ROBINSON IN SUPPORT OF CONFIRMATION TO THE  
DISTRICT COURT OF THE FIRST CIRCUIT, JUDICIAL NOMINEE, ROBERT J.  
BROWN (JUDICIARY COMMUNICATION NO. 2)**

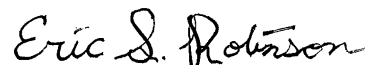
Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Committee Members:

I have had the honor of working with Robert J. (“RJ”) Brown since 2019 and I write to provide my **strong support** for Mr. Brown’s confirmation to the District Court of the First Circuit. Mr. Brown has been with my firm, Starn O’Toole Marcus & Fisher, for more than five years and is a highly valued member of our team. In the time that I have been privileged to work with Mr. Brown, he has demonstrated his integrity, temperament, empathy, and work ethic time and again. I believe these attributes make Mr. Brown well suited for the bench. My colleagues at the firm share my belief that Mr. Brown has the attributes to be an outstanding addition to the judiciary.

In his practice, Mr. Brown takes great care to listen to and understand all sides of a dispute, and he treats everyone—attorneys and litigants alike—with respect and dignity. Mr. Brown has excellent analytical and legal skills and is always a pleasure to work with, whether you are a colleague or opposing counsel. He has a warm and magnetic personality which makes him a great team leader. Outside of work, I cherish the discourse Mr. Brown and I have because he is always able to demonstrate his innate ability to fairly evaluate and weigh our topic *du jour*. Mr. Brown is, simply put, a class act.

While I would personally be disappointed to lose Mr. Brown as a colleague, his confirmation to the bench would be a tremendous gain for the people of Hawai‘i. Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of Mr. Brown.

Very truly yours,



Eric S. Robinson

August 16, 2023

**VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION**

Hawaii State Capitol  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit –  
Robert J. Brown**

Sir/Madam:

I am writing to give my highest recommendation of Robert J. (RJ) Brown for the District Court of the First Circuit judicial appointment. RJ has been with my firm, Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher for more than five years and is a highly valued member of our team. He has excellent analytic and legal skills and is someone who works well with everyone, from his colleagues to opposing counsel. He has a warm and magnetic personality which makes him a great team leader.

All of us at the firm are of the opinion that RJ has the attributes to be an outstanding addition to the judiciary. He has the appropriate temperament, strong work ethic, and innate ability to fairly evaluate and weigh situations. He takes great care to listen to and understand all sides to a dispute, and he treats all attorneys and litigants alike with respect and dignity.

While I would be sad to lose RJ as a colleague, our firm's loss would be a gain for the people of Hawai'i.

Thank you very much for your consideration of RJ Brown as your next nominee.

Very truly yours,



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Judith A. Pavey

## Miki Tsushima

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**From:** Greg Frey  
**Sent:** Monday, August 14, 2023 10:07 AM  
**To:** 'senrhoads@capitol.hawaii.gov'  
**Subject:** Judicial Appointment - Robert J. Brown  
**Attachments:** Brown Email of Support.pdf

Aloha, Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee, and Members of this vaulted and important Committee.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on Chief Justice Mark E. Recktenwald's recent judicial appointment of ROBERT J. BROWN JD10174 to the District Court of the First Circuit.

Attached to this email is a copy of two writings I respectfully request the entire Senate Judiciary Committee to carefully consider. Each is an email/letter I previously penned and sent in support of Judge Brown, as follows: 1) The earlier to a law-related group which collectively supports Judge Brown's quest, properly redacted, and; 2) The second to our Chief Justice in support of (per diem) Judge Brown's selection to the District Court of the First Circuit. Your committee's review of each of these earlier email/letters, I hope and trust, clearly indicates just how polished, convicted, devoted and experienced Judge Brown already is at present by virtue of his current per diem appointment to the First Circuit Family Court. I have appeared before Judge Brown, and believe and trust me, he is absolutely and without question the best and most well-deserved choice/appointment.

Based on this email and attachments, it is respectfully requested that your committee find Judge Brown QUALIFIED for the appointment, and that the Senate Judiciary Committee CONFIRM our Chief Justice's fine, appropriate and more than correct appointment. Judge Brown is a proud HSBA Leadership Institute Alumni, and deserves this important position. He'll serve Hawaii's people and our Judiciary well and with distinction

Very Truly Yours,

P. GREGORY FREY, Esq.  
(HSBA President 2020)  
Senior Attorney  
Coates Frey & Hackett, AAL LLLC  
900 Fort Street Mall, Suite 1400  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
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## Miki Tsushima

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**From:** ChiefJustice <ChiefJustice@courts.hawaii.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 11, 2023 12:01 PM  
**To:** Greg Frey  
**Subject:** Re: First Judicial Nominees to First Circuit District Court (Oahu)

Thank you for your submission.

Jaye Atiburcio  
Executive Secretary to Chief Justice Mark E. Recktenwald  
Phone: (808) 539-4702

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**From:** Greg Frey <pgfrey@coatesandfrey.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 11, 2023 11:46 AM  
**To:** ChiefJustice <ChiefJustice@courts.hawaii.gov>  
**Subject:** First Judicial Nominees to First Circuit District Court (Oahu)

You don't often get email from pgfrey@coatesandfrey.com. [Learn why this is important](#)  
Aloha, Chief Justice Recktenwald.

I read with interest the Press Release posted on 07/05/2023 which invites “public comment” on Judicial nominees submitted to you by the Judicial Selection Commission for vacancies at the First Circuit District Court (Oahu). As always, mahalo for the opportunity to tell you what I think as you decide what you will do “this time around.”

As is said, “timing is everything.” Quite literally, when I received your Press Release, I was finishing a strong and enthusiastic email endorsement of one of the listed nominees to a HSBA group/committee, many of whom (if not all of whom) believe as I do. I thought it best to attach a copy of this very email I wrote a few days ago, properly redacted, in strong and “crystal clear” support of (per diem) Judge Robert J. Brown to be one of your selections to the District Court. I think the attached email ([See](#), below) “spells-out” exactly why I think Judge Brown is the obvious choice, and I of course hope he’ll end up as a District Family Court Judge (where he currently devotes his per diem service and assignment).

Truth be told, Chief Justice, I rarely if ever “come out” so strongly for any Judicial nominee, but in this case, it’s a “no brainer.” I hope you agree with me, Chief Justice Recktenwald, that Judge Brown is more than deserving of the appointment. His talents, commitment and intelligence will ensure that all folks who need access to justice will get it, fairly and with respect, in Judge Brown’s courtroom.

Thank you, Chief Justice, and please don’t hesitate to contact me through one of your aides if the need arises or if you have any questions.

P. GREGORY FREY  
Senior Attorney  
Coates Frey & Hackett, AAL LLLC  
900 Fort Street Mall, Suite 1400



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**From:** Greg Frey  
**Sent:** Monday, July 10, 2023 8:53 AM  
**Subject:** RE: Letter of Support for RJ Brown to the District Court

**ALOHA**, [redacted].

**MAHALO** for your email of **07/06/2023 @ 1:29 PM**

As I was beginning to author an exceptionally strong endorsement of Judge **BROWN**, I received your email, and was so incredibly impressed. Like teammates ----- something Judge **BROWN** knows all about as a stellar former High School & NCAA athlete [who, by the way in my humble opinion, still looks as if he should be on the field ----- [redacted] is coming together to support one of its own, and its leader at that!! Teammates supporting & celebrating another teammate. That's **BIG TIME** in my humble view.

IF I may be so bold to kinda "add-on" to your email, [redacted]. Many exceptionally famed attorneys on this e-blast string make their living in Family Court, as have I for the last about 36 years. Based on this reality, I simply want to share that I have appeared before Judge **BROWN** many times since "someone" was smart enough to place him on the bench. Based on the many times I have been in Judge **BROWN's** Courtroom, please let me share the following (to sort of supplement why your plea, [redacted], is so appropriate and so important, not only (no doubt) to Judge **BROWN**, but to the Judiciary), as follows:

1. It appears that the First Circuit Family Court leadership fully recognizes that Judge **BROWN** is "the best choice" to handle the most complicated & contentious cases that present in Family Court. Each of the matters I'm involved in (or had been involved in the past) brought before Judge **BROWN** are beyond highly charged, super complicated & quite frankly, "knock down, drag out" battles. The types of cases most Family Court judges don't want to have to deal with, and those the Court tends to try to "kick the can down the road."

A) Enter Judge **BROWN**. Da Bruddah stay fearless!! Not only is he assigned these types of cases (in my experience, anyway), BUT he seems undaunted. He meets the challenges head-on, and does so with a Court "bedside manner" that I rarely ever experience. He is exceptionally even tempered. His respect for litigants & parties is unmatched ----- even when faced with "4 folks" in the Courtroom who are battling in the most emotional IF NOT hostile ways!.

B) Da Bruddah stay akamai. In my experience, many Family Court judges (most particularly those who start their careers in a *per diem* appointment) "don the robe" and take this exceptionally important & prestigious position of power & authority without ever having meaningful experience in the

Courtroom. I have no say, and won't, BUT in my personal (& professional) view, I firmly believe no Judge should take the bench without first having about 5 or so years of significant litigation, "in the Courtroom" experience. Let me tell you, Judge **BROWN** is perhaps one of the finest at being able to properly & effectively control his Courtroom. His knowledge of Courtroom procedure & the Rules of Evidence are truly unmatched. He won't remember this, BUT "right in the middle " of a terribly contested hearing, he asked me several extremely tough questions re: then pending objections / evidentiary issues. OMG. I literally said to him, outloud, "Judge, I'm thinking. I'm REALLY thinking hard. Rarely has the Court asked such learned questions of me." True story.

2. Most importantly, at least to me. Many of the clerks & staff in Family Court whom I know well & who have worked WITH (not for, and that's their words!!!) Judge BROWN have told me directly, "Judge BROWN is the finest Judge I have ever worked with." Every leader of any aspect of the law knows full well that to be "at the top of your game," you have to lead in a way that inspires & that insures respect & stability. "NUFF SAID. This clearly appears to be true re: Judge **BROWN**."

I felt very strongly that I needed to pass on these comments, opinions & experiences for ALL to think about as each of us thinks about Judge **BROWN's** nomination. Lastly, you folks have got to know that I speak the truth. HELL, I'm a "Saint Louis boy," and I'm celebrating a "Buff & Blue" That's not the norm, right!?! LOL. BE WELL, all. Smile. Laugh, Learn. Enjoy. Repeat. Repeat again.

P. GREGORY FREY, Esq.  
Senior Attorney  
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# IVAN M. LUI-KWAN

Pacific Guardian Center, Makai Tower  
733 Bishop Street, Suite 1900  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

August 17, 2023

## VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair and  
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 204  
415 S. Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Hearing on Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First  
Circuit – Robert J. Brown  
Date: Monday, August 21, 2023  
Time: 9:00 AM  
Place: Conference Room 016 & Videoconference  
State Capitol, 415 S. Beretania Street

Aloha Chair Rhoads and Members of  
the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

I am pleased to give my highest recommendation of Robert J. (RJ)  
Brown for the District Court of the First Circuit judicial appointment.

It is my strong belief that, if confirmed, RJ will be an outstanding judge.

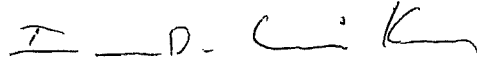
- Fairness. RJ is an extraordinarily fair person.
- Judgment. He has excellent judgment.
- Analytical Capacity. His analytical skills are superior.
- Respect. He treats all people – lawyers, administrative personnel and others – with respect and dignity.

I truly believe that, if confirmed, RJ will serve with distinction on the  
bench.

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair and  
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary  
August 17, 2023  
Page 2

Thank you very much for allowing me to present this testimony.

Mahalo nui,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ivan M. Lui-Kwan". The signature is stylized with a large initial "I" and a long horizontal stroke.

Ivan M. Lui-Kwan

Dear Senators:

I have known RJ since we were 15. I have known him as a friend, classmate (first in high school, then later in law school), an attorney, and now a colleague. More than that, I have known him as a teenager, college student, football player, husband, and father.

RJ and I first became friends because our friend group overlapped. But, we really became close our senior year of high school when we both were in a current events class. The teacher we had was unique, and she would often have us watch a news clip or read an article and then ask open-ended questions (knowing full well that there would be *heated* opinions on the matter). RJ and I were often at opposite ends of the debate spectrum, but we learned early on how to listen and try to understand where the other side was coming from.

In college, our wide-ranging debates continued, often via a random social media platform. Again, no matter how heated the arguments, RJ always listened to the other side, researched the issue, and respectfully countered with his own position. Our debates continued years later in person, when we ended up in the same law school class at UH Manoa.

I was thrilled to watch RJ thrive after law school at the Prosecutor's office. I was even more excited when RJ decided he wanted to do something different, and move into private practice. Working with him as a colleague over the past five years has been a full-circle experience and reiterated what I already knew: (1) RJ is incredibly smart, and can easily learn and understand complex legal issues; (2) he is an excellent writer, and someone that we can always lean on to knock out a complex brief; (3) he is fair, and while always advocating for the clients he needs to advocate for, is cognizant of not overstating his case; and (4) he is amazing with people –RJ has an innate ability to respectfully listen and make sure people feel like they have been heard. This is true of colleagues, clients, and opposing counsel. I believe these qualities are the exact type that are needed for judges.

RJ's recent work as a per diem judge has been so rewarding for him, and I know he takes the responsibility and the work seriously. There is no doubt in my mind that he is taking the time to prepare, listen, and evaluate each case that comes before him with the utmost care. There should not be any concern that RJ is too young or too inexperienced, his work ethic and judgment speak for themselves.

RJ is someone who I can lean on for any problem, legal or otherwise, and I know that he will provide thoughtful and respectful feedback, even if he disagrees. He does not hesitate to share his opinion or make a decision, but he always does so in a respectful manner. It goes without saying that I believe RJ would be an excellent addition to the judiciary.

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/14/2023 11:21:10 AM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Darla Abbatiello	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments: Aloha, I am not able to upload my testimony. I am honored to give a testimony for Robert (RJ) Brown. I retired as a police sergeant for the Kauai Police Department on May 1, 2023 after serving for 34 years. I first met RJ when he attended Colorado University and played football with my son, Jordon Dizon. Although Jordon and RJ were raised with different backgrounds, Jordon from single mother (me) who worked long hours to support three children, RJ's upbringing was a much more comfortable living conditions. The reason I bring this up is because when I met and got to know RJ and his Ohana, it didn't matter to him how my son was raised and the struggles he went through being raised by a single parent. RJ and his Ohana treated Jordon and myself no different than most would have been expected to be treated. This has remained the same to this day. I had the opportunity to stay at RJ and his beautiful wife, Rikki's house. I shall point out that Rikki also comes from a family that has been blessed with no financial worries. I was extremely impressed with how humble their lifestyle was and still is and at no time did I feel uncomfortable,, I only felt welcomed. In other words, RJ, his OHANA and his wife are not judgmental, they have respect and compassion for all. I like that RJ and Rikki have four beautiful sons and raising them to be humble and to respect others and they do in on their own. That's HUGE. I have friends who are close Judges on Kauai, one is like my sister, Laurel Loo. When I spoke with RJ regarding preparing a testimony, during the conversation, RJ said, "Auntie, I need to call you back. My baby is sick and I need to change his diaper, doo doo everywhere.". WOW, I was so impressed that not only could RJ well afford to have someone else take care of his children, he does not, he does it. That is HUGE, that shows the true man that RJ is. Now, why do I believe that RJ should be considered for judgeship with the District Court of the First Circuit. First off, it's RJ's choices in life to be humble, respectful, caring and one who cares to be the caregiver to his children and not others. This alone will assist him in the position of knowing what first hand what parenting is about. Then comes the fact that RJ does not sit himself on a high pedestal, a very important positive behavior to have dealing with families who are at their lowest and dealing with tension. Although RJ has compassion for others and does not have a mean bone in his body, RJ is able to ensure that the outcome of his decisions are for the best of children, which is very important. Lastly, it's RJ's integrity that will assist him with this position. More importantly, RJ is an honest man who loves his wife, children, family members, and his close friends. Again, as I mentioned, I am truly honored to support RJ for the position and would love a zoom interview so you can see my passion. Mahalo, Darla Abbatiello

# HARRISON & MATSUOKA

*Attorneys at Law*

William A. Harrison  
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August 19, 2023

*Via: Web: [www.capitol.hawaii.gov/submittestimony.aspx](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/submittestimony.aspx)*

## **SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY**

**Chair: Sen. Karl Rhoads**

**Vice Chair: Sen. Mike Gabbard**

DATE: Monday, August 21, 2023

TIME: 9:00 a.m.

PLACE: Conference Room 016 & Videoconference  
State Capitol  
415 Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

### **Hearing for Consideration and Confirmation to the District Court of the First Circuit, Judicial Nominee, ROBERT J. BROWN**

Honorable Senators: Karl Rhoads, Mike Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary.

I am writing to offer my enthusiastic support for Robert J. Brown as a candidate for the District Court of the First Circuit. I have known Robert J. Brown since he was a student in my Innocence Project Class at WSRSL. He was a leader in class and he took that leadership into his practice, initially as a prosecutor and then into private practice at Stearns.



## SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Chair: Sen. Karl Rhoads

Vice Chair: Sen. Mike Gabbard

Date: Monday, August 21, 2023

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I have had the opportunity of observing him, up front and close, as an opponent in a high publicity criminal trial. I was extremely impressed with his professionalism in the courtroom. His ability as an advocate, his integrity, his calmness under fire and importantly his civility were all impeccable. I saw then, the same qualities that he now exhibits quite well as a per diem Judge.

Having spoken with individuals who have appeared before him as a per diem Judge, I understand that he is given the most difficult of cases, and resolves them with aplomb. This does not surprise me because he did this first as a student, then as a prosecutor and continues to do so in his private practice.

I have had the additional pleasure of socializing with him from time to time. I know that family is a keen priority in his life. He also is very civic-minded and has an amazing respect for this special community, in which we live.

Rule 11 of the Rules of the Judicial Selection Commission requires us to consider the following qualities when considering a judicial candidate: integrity, moral courage, legal ability, experience, intelligence, compassion, fairness, diligence, decisiveness, and judicial temperament. Mr. Brown excels in each of these traits.

In addition to the above, Mr. Brown is an extremely hard worker and has brought and will continue to bring that work ethic to the bench.

Finally, I can never reiterate enough that you should select only those individuals who will provide every member of the public a level playing field. Again, I genuinely believe that Mr. Brown is in possession of this most important attribute, which will make him an excellent judge.



**SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY**

**Chair: Sen. Karl Rhoads**

**Vice Chair: Sen. Mike Gabbard**

Date: Monday, August 21, 2023

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I have spoken with many other individuals who know Mr. Brown and they concur in this assessment. He has an excellent reputation amongst his peers in the legal community. He is also known to treat everyone, clients, judges, and opponents alike with decency and respect.

In short, it is my abiding belief that Robert J. Brown would make an amazing full time Judge. I therefore have no reservations in highly recommending Mr. Brown for the vacant District Court Judgeship.

If you have any further questions or need any further elaboration, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



WILLIAM A. HARRISON

# Medusky & Co., Inc.

REAL ESTATE CONSULTANTS

QUEEN'S COURT, SUITE 404 • 800 BETHEL STREET  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
PHONE (808) 531-2765 • FAX (808) 599-3736  
EMAIL - medusky@meduskyandco.com

Jan R. Medusky, MAI, CRE

August 14, 2023

Senate Judiciary Committee  
Hawai'i State Capitol  
415 South Beretania St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

Subject: JC2 Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the District Court of the First Circuit, Judicial Nominee, ROBERT J. BROWN

We are providing written testimony to you to strongly recommend Robert J. Brown, Esq. to serve as a judge in the District Court of the First Circuit.

We are appraisers who have worked with Mr. Brown on a variety of assignments that required legal counsel for clients. In every situation, we found Mr. Brown to perform with competency and integrity. Further, he has consistently provided counsel in a timely manner, quickly assessing the situation, understanding the issues involved and acting courteously.

We believe he would be a great judge for the First Circuit.

Sincerely,

MEDUSKY & CO., INC.



Jan R. Medusky, MAI, CRE  
President



Edward W. Becker, MAI  
Real Estate Appraiser

In Support of JC2  
Before the Committee on Judiciary  
August 21, 2023

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee:

I write in strong support of JC2, which appoints Robert J. Brown to the District Court of the First Circuit. Mr. Brown has always acted with competence and integrity. Thank you for considering my testimony in support.

Sincerely,  
Nelisa Asato

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/11/2023 4:11:24 PM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
James Manjiro Yuda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: My name is James M. Yuda and I am an attorney in good standing. I write to express my support for the confirmation of Robert J. Brown for district court judge of the First Circuit. "RJ", as he is known to his friends and family, is a genuinely nice person. I have known him since law school. More importantly here, however, is that RJ is capable, intelligent, and diligent. Most importantly, he has a strong sense of fairness. I have no doubt that he will apply these qualities to the bench and be a good judge. All judges, like all human beings, make mistakes. Many judges, however, are not willing to admit them. I believe that RJ will apply his considerable abilities to the bench and that, if confronted with an error of his own making, is a big enough man to both admit it and correct it. We need people like this on the bench. Thank you.

Re: JC 2 (Testimony in Support of Robert J. Brown)

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee:

My name is Ross Shinyama. I am a Partner at Watanabe Ing LLP. I submit this testimony in my personal capacity and as a licensed attorney in the State of Hawai'i for the past 15 plus years.

I submit this testimony in support of Robert J. Brown and his nomination for District Court Judge in the First Circuit. I have known Mr. Brown on a professional and personal level for almost a decade. On a professional level, Mr. Brown has demonstrated a high level of intelligence and comprehension as to the laws of our State. I have participated in depositions with him where he has been able to balance his role of a zealous advocate with the appropriate level of respect to other counsel and the legal process. His mixed background in both criminal and civil law would also be a great asset to our existing bench. On a personal level, Mr. Brown is a devoted family man to his wife and children. He has strong ties to our small community and I have always found him to be a man of strong morals and ethics. In sum, I fully support Mr. Brown's nomination and believe he would be a great asset to our judicial bench.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this letter of support.

Ross T. Shinyama, Esq.

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/12/2023 4:41:34 PM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jonathan Fleming	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: I've known Robert Joseph Brown since we were fourteen years old. He has always been easy to like and a natural leader. His work ethic has impressed me. It is admirable to see him commit to goals while adhering to his personal virtues and values. Observing him evolve into a loving husband and father while also giving so much to his communities is inspiring. He now serves as a good mentor for continuing to develop professionally while maintaining a timeless friendship. I wholeheartedly recommend him. I envision him as a fair and sensitive judge—able to make decisions on a case by case basis that will help individuals and the community.

August 12, 2023

Senate Judiciary Committee  
Hawai'i State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Subject: Letter of Support for Mr. Robert J. Brown as District Court Judge

Dear Judiciary Committee,

I am writing this letter to wholeheartedly endorse and support the candidacy of Mr. Robert J. Brown for the position of District Court Judge of the First Circuit. Having known him both personally and professionally since he pursued his law degree, I can confidently attest to his exceptional qualifications, unwavering integrity, and outstanding commitment to justice.

Mr. Brown's professional experience reflects his diverse and impressive legal career, which has equipped him with a comprehensive understanding of the judicial system. As a Per Diem Judge in the Family Court of the First Circuit, he has presided over a wide range of Family Court calendars, handling sensitive matters related to temporary restraining orders, paternity, custody, divorce proceedings, and drug court. This experience has provided him with a deep appreciation for the complexities of family law and the ability to navigate these cases with fairness and compassion.

As a Litigation Associate at Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher, Mr. Brown has demonstrated his exceptional skills as a civil litigator. His inclusion in Hawaii's Super Lawyers "Rising Star" list in the practice area of Business Litigation for consecutive years is a testament to his legal prowess and outstanding advocacy. Additionally, his recognition on the Best Lawyers in America "Ones to Watch" list in multiple practice areas highlights his versatility and expertise in commercial litigation, real estate litigation, and criminal defense.

Mr. Brown's previous role as a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney showcases his extensive courtroom experience and ability to handle complex criminal cases. Having served as lead counsel on over 20 felony jury trials, ranging from drug possession to murder, he has honed his skills in presenting compelling arguments and ensuring a fair trial process. This experience has provided him with a deep understanding of the criminal justice system and the importance of upholding the rights of both victims and defendants.

Furthermore, Mr. Brown's dedication to legal education is evident through his role as an Adjunct Professor at William S. Richardson School of Law. As a lecturer for the Space

Law and Policy class, he imparted his knowledge and expertise on relevant treaties and the application of customary international law. His commitment to educating future legal professionals highlights his passion for sharing knowledge and contributing to the development of the legal community.

In addition to his legal achievements, Mr. Brown has excellent communication skills, leadership qualities, and dedication to public service. His experience as a reporter for the *Honolulu Civil Beat* demonstrates his ability to effectively cover a range of issues, from public housing to government transparency. His commitment to factual reporting and promoting transparency underscores his integrity and commitment to the principles of journalism.

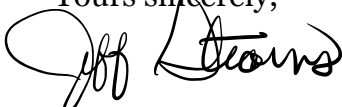
Mr. Brown's educational background further solidifies his qualifications for the role of District Court Judge. His Juris Doctor degree from William S. Richardson School of Law is complemented by his notable achievements, including delivering the Full-Time Student Commencement Speech for the Class of 2014. His success in moot court competitions and his externship under the mentorship of Judge John F. Stavelly at the Boulder County Court further attest to his dedication and ability to excel in a legal environment.

In conclusion, based on my personal knowledge and my interaction with Mr. Brown, I wholeheartedly support his candidacy for the position of District Court Judge. His exceptional qualifications, unwavering integrity, and commitment to justice make him an ideal candidate for this esteemed position. I am confident that, if appointed, Mr. Brown will serve with distinction and contribute significantly to the administration of justice in our district.

I urge you to give full consideration to Mr. Brown's candidacy for the role of District Court Judge of the First Circuit. If you require any further information or would like to discuss his qualifications in more detail, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your time and attention. I am confident that Mr. Brown will excel as a District Court Judge and uphold the highest standards of fairness, impartiality, and justice.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Stearns". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jeff" being more prominent than the last name "Stearns".

Jeff Stearns  
4219 Puulani Place  
Honolulu, HI 96816  
Professor, Honolulu CC  
[stearnsj@gmail.com](mailto:stearnsj@gmail.com) (808) 221-6455



Date: August 12, 2023

To: Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair  
and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary

Re: JC2, Testimony in Support of the Confirmation to the District Court of the First Circuit,  
Judicial Nominee, Robert J. Brown

Hearing: Monday, August 21, 2023, 9:00 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 016  
415 South Beretania Street

It is my honor to write this testimony in support of the confirmation to the District Court of the First Circuit, Judicial Nominee, Robert J. Brown. I have known Mr. Brown for over 10 years, having first met him while he was serving as a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney (DPA) with the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney, City and County of Honolulu.

While Mr. Brown served as a DPA, my interactions with him as opposing counsel, both in and out of court were pleasant. He consistently demonstrated a high degree of legal acumen in criminal law in prosecuting cases in court. Mr. Brown came to court prepared. He handled his cases with professionalism, with the goal of resolving them in a just and fair manner.

Mr. Brown held defendants accountable and fought for the victims in his cases. Nonetheless, he did not view defendants as the enemy. Mr. Brown sought justice and through his words and actions demonstrated his belief that defendants were redeemable or at a minimum worthy of an opportunity for redemption. It is this ability to see the humanity in defendants that spoke to Mr. Brown's character. For this and many reasons, Mr. Brown has my trust and respect.

Mr. Brown possesses a calm demeanor, which is indicative of good judicial temperament. He has excellent interpersonal skills. He treats everyone with dignity and respect regardless of status. I have never witnessed Mr. Brown behave or speak in an inappropriate manner.

Again, I support the confirmation of Judicial Nominee, Robert J. Brown. From my personal experience, Mr. Brown is a person of great character and integrity. If confirmed, Mr. Brown would be a positive reflection of the Hawaii State Judiciary. Thank you for taking the time to read and consider my testimony.

Respectfully,



Okechukwu "Okie" Amadi  
Deputy Public Defender  
State of Hawaii

Senate Judiciary Committee:

It brings me great joy and honor to support Robert J “RJ” Brown as a judge for the District Court of the First Circuit.

I had the privilege of being RJ’s position coach at the University of Colorado. From the time he stepped on campus, he was the epitome of a student-athlete. He took great pride in his work in the classroom as well as on the field. RJ was also invested in the success of his teammates and the greater community around him. He has always been the ultimate team player - there is nobody more loyal and faithful than him. RJ has always been a man of character and integrity. I’ve always trusted that he will do what is right! RJ’s work ethic exceeded expectations, even at the highest level of competition. He leads by example and makes others around him better. I have seen first-hand the way he faces challenges straight on- with a level head, determination and without fear. His mindset has always been that he will find a way! I will forever be a fan of his, on and off the field, because he has proven to me that he is trustworthy, reliable, and willing to do any and everything to get the job done right.

While the years have passed since we were at the University of Colorado together, I will always respect and fully support anything RJ is involved in. In my book, RJ is a proven winner! He came to Colorado as a walk-on player and overcame all odds to become a team captain for our special teams units. In my 30 years of coaching at the collegiate level (including a National Championship), as well as a 9-year NFL career and ‘85 Super Bowl Championship with the Chicago Bears- I have played with and coached not just great players on the field but also Champions off the field. RJ is a champion in everything he does! I’m proud to stand up for him in support, especially in my home state of Hawaii!

I have no doubt the great state of Hawaii would benefit from the character, work ethic and loyalty of RJ if given the opportunity to serve as a judge in the District Court of the First Circuit. He has made a lasting impact on me, the University of Colorado and will do the same wherever he goes in the future.

Respectfully and a proud Hawaiian,

Coach Brian Cabral  
University of Colorado  
Athletics Character Coach

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/14/2023 9:01:39 AM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Burkley Showe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: Senate Judiciary Committee, I am writing this letter in support of Robert J. Brown, as a nominee to serve as a Judge in the District Court of the First Circuit. I would like to introduce myself as Burkley Showe, Vice President of Development at The Resort Group, which owns and manages some of Hawai'i's largest resort communities. I have been a professional business colleague of Mr. Brown for over ten years and have been a supporter of all his ambitions. I have had the pleasure of watching him advance and excel—from his time at William S. Richardson School of Law to his current role as a dynamic litigator at Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher and per diem judge at the First Circuit Court. I recall listening to Mr. Brown give the commencement speech at his law school graduation and how it resonated with me and so many others, and this was the precise moment I knew Mr. Brown would be a great leader in our local community. In addition to his stellar inspirational qualities, Mr. Brown's integrity is of the upmost and emphasis on his family, making him a natural leader both inside and outside the courtroom. In addition to our professional relationship, I'm honored to call him a personal friend. Mr. Brown is one of the only people in my life I have sought personal guidance from. His passion for the law and upholding a fair and reasonable outcome is pervasive not only in his career, but also in his personal life. I am confident Mr. Brown will become a bright beacon within the First Circuit Court, a moral compass in human form, who is respected and valued by community members, lawyers, and other judges alike. Zero doubt exists that he is the right man for this role and I am 1000% supportive of his nomination. Please let me know if you would like to discuss this further. Sincerely, Burkley Showe Vice President of Development The Resort Group

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/14/2023 9:21:07 AM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Avery Matro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: Aloha, I am writing in support of Robert J. Brown’s appointment as a Judge to the District Court of the First Circuit. RJ was a year below me at WSRSL. At WSRSL, it was always impressed upon us that our reputations within the legal community started in law school. From the beginning, RJ developed a reputation as a kind, considerate, and thoughtful person. When RJ and I worked together as Deputy Prosecuting Attorneys, I was able to see first-hand how he carried his thoughtfulness and consideration to every case that he handled. He truly cared about the people involved in the cases that he handled and this pushed him to be very thorough and diligent in his preparation and practice. It also made him a great team player. We all had heavy caseloads, but RJ was always available to talk through a case with you, to brainstorm ideas, and to listen sympathetically when you’ve had a particularly frustrating day. Throughout his legal career RJ has always sought to do good. This is what motivated him to run for Prosecuting Attorney and what motivated him to be a family court per diem judge. When we grabbed coffee together a few months ago, I asked him how he liked being a judge. He answered that being a per diem judge was the most fulfilling job he has ever had. His eyes lit up as he talked about being able to make a difference in people’s lives and how he felt like he was doing something meaningful. In fact, when he started working more hours as a per diem judge, he asked his firm for a reduced position so that he could devote more time to being a judge. RJ is driven by the need to be part of something bigger than himself. This is why he made a great prosecuting attorney and why he’ll make a great judge. For these reasons, I strongly support RJ’s appointment. Thank you, Avery

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/14/2023 9:31:51 AM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nofoaiga Eletise	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: It is my great pleasure to write this testimony in support of Robert J. Brown. My name is Nofo Eletise. I am an Associate Pastor at Kaimuki Christian Church, Honolulu. I've known Robert Brown, or RJ as we call him, as a good friend and church member for several years. RJ Brown is a man of integrity who brings a mix of diligence, humility, persistence, and intelligence to all he does. I know he does the same to his proceedings in court. One of RJ's best qualities is his dedication to his family. He has four amazing little men that I have seen him raise and care for with his wife. They are remarkable little human beings. He is patient with them, and they are deeply loved. He also cares deeply for our island community. I had the privilege just a few weeks ago to volunteer alongside RJ as he served in the Palolo Housing on a community work/paint day. He brought his two older boys. Doing acts of service in the community is a regular event for the Brown family. He and his wife serve at Kaimuki Christian Church in our outreach ministry. RJ puts his compassion into action. My relationship with RJ Brown is personal and not professional. I have eaten meals with him and have had him in my home. While I am confident that each candidate for this highest job on the court has a combination of higher education and professional qualifications that are suitable for this position, I know that Robert J. Brown is the most qualified for the role. His combination of high character, humility, and intelligence suits him perfectly to meet the highest standards as a Judge. I could not think of a better man or woman for the job. If I can answer any other questions, please let me know. Our community and state would be blessed to have a man like RJ on the bench. Sincerely, Rev Nofo Eletise Nofo Eletise Kaimuki Christian Church 1117 Koko Head Ave, Honolulu, HI 96816 808-735-1771

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/14/2023 11:53:00 AM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mark Quezada	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: I'm writing in support of Robert J. Brown serving as a judge in the District Court of the First Circuit. I met RJ (as he's known to me) around May of 2010 when he was hired as a reporter for the Honolulu Civil Beat. At the time, I worked there as one of the principal engineers hired directly by Randy Ching and Pierre Omidyar. Through our time working at Civil Beat together it became clear that RJ had an unshakable faith and optimism in humanity. In a newsroom that could skew heavily in views of a certain direction, he remained level-headed and open to opposing views. All while remaining calm, collected and even optimistic in the toughest of circumstances. Being more of a skeptic myself, RJ's optimism was attractive. It's disarming and real and I believe it's what makes him a good listener, and ultimately a good judge. During the time we worked together RJ had not yet decided to go into law but I remember talking with him soon after he made the decision. When I asked "why law?", he said that, first of all, he loved the law itself from a academic perspective, but also it was the best way he could think of to have a big impact helping people. Coming from anyone else, I may not have believed them. But RJ is true and real and he really does care deeply about each and every person who's future is put into his care through the law. We became friends and have remained in touch since our days at Civil Beat. I also remember talking with him after he was given the opportunity to work as a per diem judge in Family Court. When I asked how it was going he said that the role was a difficult one, but it was incredibly fulfilling. He said he realized he had finally found his calling and that he believed being a judge was the professional path that was best suited for his personality, interests and skillset. I couldn't agree more. He may be younger than other candidates but I am confident that you will not find a better, more qualified and truly passionate individual of the highest caliber of character to fill the role than Robert J. Brown. Best Regards, Mark

Aloha Senate Judiciary Committee,

I'm writing to you from a train in Yorkshire, England (Cheers!) so that I may express my strong support for Robert J "RJ" Brown as a judge on the district court of the First Circuit. I am honored to know RJ through my church men's small group gatherings and as a friend.

Through my observations I can say 'RJ' is one of the few persons I've known who's an extremely good listener. He possesses a unique discipline in which he listens first, then formulates a thoughtful reply, on almost every topic or conversation.

Even during some of the more 'heated' group discussions, RJ possesses a unique ability to convey a non-opinionated, rational comment or response which provides each person participating in the discussion to ponder his 'mostly logical' analysis and thought. (Albeit I disagree with him frequently on the NCAA football top 25 rankings!.)

*It is a refreshing gift in that too many times we encounter persons who talk -sometimes incessantly, and express no interest in listening.*

This non-intimidating disposition, esp. from a former NCAA football player(!), is what I find most impressive, and why I consider it an honor to call him a friend.

His passion for his family, friends, colleagues, and the Law is why I know his integrity is beyond reproach.

I would be happy to elaborate on my support for RJ Brown any time via email or phone.

Mahalo!

Robert Jackson  
Honolulu  
President  
Island Traditions of Hawaii Inc - Kookaburra LLC

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/15/2023 7:23:56 AM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cameron T. Holm	Individual	Comments Only	Written Testimony Only

Comments: I've known RJ since law school. What's always stood out to me about RJ is his intelligence, work ethic and genuine consideration for others. He will be a great addition to the judiciary as a full time judge.



Florence Pajardo  
98-1442 Hoohonua Street  
Pearl City, HI 96792

August 15, 2023

To Whom it May Concern:

I am a staff employee at Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher.

It is my sincere pleasure to know Robert J. Brown (known as "RJ") as an associate with the firm. I know he used to work as a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney with the city & County of Honolulu and was a Per Diem Judge at District Court prior to this recent appointment as a full time District Judge with the First Circuit Court.

Although I have not personally worked with him on cases, RJ is always pleasant to talk to, treats other equally, no matter who you are or where you come from. He is dedicated family man with four young boys. Observing him for the past four years, one can see he is humble, modest, a wonderful person with exceptional character who demonstrates a sincere concern for others and strong morals. He is a positive person with a cheerful personality. One can see he is dedicated to public service and his heart is in helping the community.

RJ would be an excellent District Court Judge. He is patient, will listen to both sides to fairly evaluate situations. He genuinely cares about others. He will be a great asset to the judicial system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Florence Pajardo', written in a cursive style.

Florence Pajardo

To Whom It May Concern,

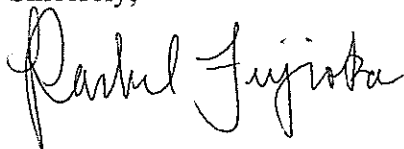
I write to offer my support for Mr. Robert J. Brown as a Judicial Nominee. I have known Mr. Brown for the past 24 years and can attest to his outstanding, kind and compassionate character. He will always put the needs of others before himself and do the right thing.

I'd like to reference a situation I witnessed because it speaks volumes to his character. As I was waiting at a traffic light on a slope overlooking Kahala Times supermarket, I witnessed Mr. Brown park his car far from the market entrance and was wondering why he choose to park his car at such an inconvenient spot. When he got out in his business suit, he walked over to homeless man in a wheelchair who was clearly struggling to push himself through the parking lot and immediately began pushing him towards the market entrance while smiling and speaking with him. I watched as they entered the market together and went out of sight. I asked Mr. Brown about it later and he told me how he pushed the man through the market collecting groceries and paid for his groceries. At a time when no one was looking, without seeking any praise acknowledgement, I witnessed him do the right thing, the thing that everyone else that parking lot had failed to do- be a good human being and help your fellow neighbor, regardless of their circumstance. It brings me to tears retelling this story because it is just one of many examples reflecting his outstanding character that I've been able to witness throughout my time knowing him.

He is a public servant and always serves to do the right thing, to help people in all situations and circumstances. Mr. Brown has been a Big Brother to a young man for 10 years, and to this day keeps in touch with his Little Brother and family. He's worked countless hours as a prosecutor, finding justice for victims. I've seen him sacrifice time from his family to ensure he's performing to the best of his ability for the greater cause. He is a dedicated family man and father of 4 outstanding young boys. He is able to look at a situation from all aspects with fairness and has the ability to diffuse any situation. I have witnessed him in conflict, in sorrow, in stress- you name it, and have never witnessed him lose his cool. He is someone that I trust and when times get hard or I need guidance, he's one of the first people I call.

The State of Hawaii needs people like Mr. Brown. You can speak to anyone that knows him and you will not find one bad thing about him. He is a local boy raised in Hawaii who knows our state and understands the challenges it faces. He tackles every obstacle with compassion and fairness. I humbly ask that you consider Mr. Brown for this position, he is well suited to serve the people of Hawaii.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rachel Fujioka". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rachel Fujioka

To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of Robert Brown for consideration and confirmation to the District Court of the First Circuit.

I have known Robert (RJ) for approximately 15 years, we met at the University of Colorado where we played football together, because of the familiarity of both being from Hawaii, we became very close very quickly.

RJ was a walk-on that faced an uphill battle to compete for a spot and playing time, but he accepted the challenge with a grinder mentality. He never wavered in his journey and against the odds, earned playing time and, not only that, became one of very few in the history of Colorado football, a walk-on. Team Captain. His work ethic, character and unbelievable leadership lead the team to vote a non-starter as a team captain.

As far as our friendship went, we lived together during our time there and I got to witness his courtship with his wife Riki Brown. He was extremely respectful, honest and attentive in his approach and truly taught me what a healthy relationship looks like. Fast forward and now I get to witness what an incredible husband and dad he is, he still is the exact same guy that approaches life with some morals that values.

RJ and I have been very close friends over the years and time nor distance have watered down our relationship, he has always been my rock that keeps it real for me, he is the guy I can always rely on to be level headed and not biased with his advice to me. I thank God that I have a person like RJ to lean on as a friend and person.

I wish more people could experience the good of what RJ has brought to my life and for so many other people around us. I strongly believe his morals, steadfast nature, and common sense would be invaluable to the people of Hawaii. I know he will represent the State of Hawaii with honor and appreciation, with no ego or bias, on the grounds of strong ethics, and with a heart of gold.

Jordon Dizon

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/15/2023 8:59:06 AM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Chris Ponsar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: I have known RJ Brown for many years both personally and professionally. In my opinion, RJ will be an excellent judge that the people of Hawai'i will benefit from for years to come. Mr. Brown is fair, intelligent, and always considers all viewpoints and evidence when evaluating issues. I strongly support the nomination of Mr. Brown, and am available to discuss further if desired. Aloha, Chris Ponsar

# STARN ° O'TOOLE ° MARCUS & FISHER

A LAW CORPORATION

August 15, 2023

## VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION

Hawaii State Capitol  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit –  
Robert J. Brown**

Sir/Madam:

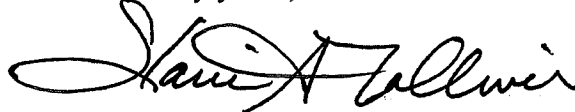
I am writing to give my highest recommendation of Robert J. (RJ) Brown for the District Court of the First Circuit judicial appointment. It's been an honor and pleasure working with RJ since he joined Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher for more than five years ago. He is a highly valued member of our team. He has excellent analytic and legal skills and is someone who works well with everyone, from his colleagues to opposing counsel. He has a warm and magnetic personality which makes him a great team leader.

All of us at the firm are of the opinion that RJ has the attributes to be an outstanding addition to the judiciary. He has the appropriate temperament, strong work ethic, and innate ability to fairly evaluate and weigh situations. He takes great care to listen to and understand all sides to a dispute, and he treats all attorneys and litigants alike with respect and dignity.

While I would be sad to lose RJ as a colleague, our firm's loss would be a gain for the people of Hawai'i.

Thank you very much for your consideration of RJ Brown as your next nominee.

Very truly yours,



Stacie A. Tolliver

To: **Judicial Committee Regarding Candidate ROBERT J. BROWN**

Date: August 15, 2023

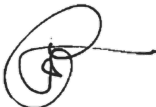
Distinguished Senators,

I am writing this letter in support of **Robert J. (“RJ”) Brown**, as a District Court Judge for the First Circuit. I am both a high school classmate and a fellow attorney who attended law school with Mr. Brown at William S. Richardson School of Law. ***There is no better and more appropriate man to serve as a Judge than Mr. Brown.***

Mr. Brown is humble, down to earth, and has an incredible set of ethics that govern everything he does – from raising his four children, to his social relationships, to his career. Mr. Brown is not politically motivated, and is not driven or influenced by religion; rather, he is fair and impartial and uses the law and common sense to make decisions. This is what the judicial system needs – a mature mind that can be impartial and fair!! There isn’t anyone else I would want to judge me!

I highly recommend Mr. Brown for selection as a District Court Judge for the First Circuit. If there are any questions or if you would like to talk further, please do not hesitate to contact me on my cell at 808-551-9761.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chynna Stone Showe'. The signature is stylized with a large, circular flourish on the left side and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Chynna Stone Showe

August 15, 2023

**VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION**

Hawaii State Capitol  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit –  
Robert J. Brown**

Sir/Madam:

I highly recommend Robert J. (RJ) Brown for the District Court of the First Circuit judicial appointment.

RJ has been with my firm, Starn O’Toole Marcus & Fisher, for more than five years, and I have worked with him directly on many difficult cases. RJ has exceptional legal skills, including the unique ability to both thoroughly analyze complicated legal issues and articulate legal positions in a crisp and understandable manner, whether orally or in writing. RJ is also a quintessential team player who thrives under pressure, and he’s a natural leader whose magnetic personality brings out the best in everyone around him.

RJ is even-tempered and unflappable, he treats everyone around him with dignity and respect, and he is always open to considering all sides of any issue. Stated differently, RJ has all of the attributes necessary to be a great judge, and he will be an outstanding addition to the judiciary.

RJ has been an invaluable member of our team at Starn O’Toole Marcus & Fisher, and we will miss his presence in the office as much as we will miss his work as a member of the team. While I would certainly be sad to lose RJ as a colleague, his confirmation as a judge would be a significant win for the people of Hawai‘i.

Very truly yours,



---

Andrew J. Lautenbach

# STARN · O'TOOLE · MARCUS & FISHER

A LAW CORPORATION

August 15, 2023

**VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION**

Hawaii State Capitol  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**Re: Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit –  
Robert J. Brown**

Sir/Madam:

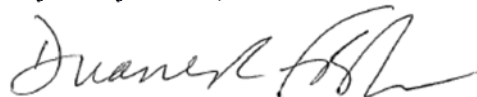
I am writing to give my highest recommendation of Robert J. (RJ) Brown for the District Court of the First Circuit judicial appointment. RJ has been with my firm, Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher for more than five years and is a highly valued member of our team. He has excellent analytic and legal skills and is someone who works well with everyone, from his colleagues to opposing counsel. He has a warm and magnetic personality which makes him a great team leader.

All of us at the firm are of the opinion that RJ has the attributes to be an outstanding addition to the judiciary. He has the appropriate temperament, strong work ethic, and innate ability to fairly evaluate and weigh situations. He takes great care to listen to and understand all sides to a dispute, and he treats all attorneys and litigants alike with respect and dignity.

While I would be sad to lose RJ as a colleague, our firm's loss would be a gain for the people of Hawai'i.

Thank you very much for your consideration of RJ Brown as your next nominee.

Very Truly Yours,



---

Duane R. Fisher



# STARN ° O'TOOLE ° MARCUS & FISHER

A LAW CORPORATION

August 15, 2023

## VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION

Hawaii State Capitol  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit –  
Robert J. Brown**

Dear Sir/Madam:

I write today to give my highest recommendation in support of Robert (“RJ”) Brown for the District Court of the First Circuit judicial appointment. I have known and worked with RJ since he started with our firm, Starn O’Toole Marcus & Fisher, in 2018. Over the last five (plus) years, I have also gotten to know RJ personally, and consider him to be a close friend. I have watched RJ grow as a human and as a lawyer and seen him rise to the challenge of balancing working as a per diem Judge in Family Court, with working at the firm, with raising a family including his four very active small boys.

As a lawyer, RJ is thorough, thoughtful, analytical, and full of integrity. He works very well with others, both on his side and opposing side alike, and commands respect through his actions. He is concerned about getting things right and doing so in the right way. Even when he is in the midst of a contentious case, opposing counsel will always greet him outside the office and the courtroom with handshakes and smiles. RJ is not afraid to ask others to walk through his thought processes with him, to ensure that he thoroughly understands the nuances of an issue.

While I have not personally seen him in action as a per diem Judge in Family Court, I have both spoken to him about his experience, and heard wonderful feedback (unprompted!) from numerous individuals who have appeared before him. On a personal level, RJ has expressed to me his love for his work as a Judge and I have watched him rise to the challenge of adjudicating difficult cases. While his work has been full of tumultuous cases, I see that this work in Family Court has also brought him great inner peace obtained from doing something worthwhile, with the best attention, thoughtfulness, energy, and compassion he could exercise.

As a person and friend, RJ is compassionate, caring, hilariously funny, and always supportive. While we do not always agree with each other, on the occasions we disagree, we do so with respect for each other, and do not let it affect our friendship or our mutual trust.

All of us at the firm are of the opinion that RJ has the attributes to be an outstanding addition to the judiciary. He has the appropriate temperament, strong work ethic, and innate ability to fairly

Senate Judiciary Committee

August 15, 2023

Page 2

evaluate and weigh situations. He takes great care to listen to and understand all sides to a dispute, and he treats all attorneys and litigants alike with respect and dignity.

While I would be sad to lose RJ as a colleague, he would be an outstanding addition to the judiciary, and our firm's loss would be a gain for the people of Hawai'i. He has a balanced temperament, a keen intellect, a strong work ethic, and will always listen to all sides with respect and dignity and do his own thorough well-reasoned analysis of each pertinent issue. Although he is a wonderful private practice attorney, I believe his full potential is met and grows in public service to his community.

Thank you very much for your consideration of RJ Brown as your next nominee.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kukui Claydon', with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Kukui Claydon

August 15, 2023

**VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION**

Hawaii State Capitol  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit –  
Robert J. Brown**

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am writing to give my highest recommendation of Robert J. (RJ) Brown for the District Court of the First Circuit judicial appointment. RJ has been with my firm, Starn O’Toole Marcus & Fisher for more than five years and is a highly valued member of our team. He has excellent analytic and legal skills and is someone who works well with everyone, from his colleagues to opposing counsel. He has a warm and magnetic personality which makes him a great team leader.

All of us at the firm are of the opinion that RJ has the attributes to be an outstanding addition to the judiciary. He has the appropriate temperament, strong work ethic, and innate ability to fairly evaluate and weigh situations. He takes great care to listen to and understand all sides to a dispute, and he treats all attorneys and litigants alike with respect and dignity.

I’ve told RJ many times that I would sabotage his dreams of being a judge by sending in opposition testimony to keep him at our law firm – but have since then come to grips with the fact that he is destined for greatness outside our firm.

Thank you very much for your consideration of RJ Brown as your next nominee. Respectfully, it would be a mistake not to seat RJ on the bench.

Sincerely,



---

Christina N. Ohira

To whom it may concern,

Please consider my testimony in support of the appointment of Robert Brown to the District Court of the First Circuit on the Island of O'ahu,

I am honored to provide this testimony in support of the appointment of Robert J. Brown, my close friend and classmate to the esteemed position of judge in the District Court of the First Circuit. Over the past 25 years, I have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the remarkable qualities and unwavering commitment to justice that he possesses. I first knew RJ, as a classmate and football teammate at Punahou School. Many of the attributes that have led him to this appointment were already evident: His strong moral compass, His compassion for his teammates and classmates, respect for our mentors.

One of the most striking aspects of his character is his strong moral compass. As adolescents, our self-interest's often superseded the rules. RJ often kept me and our friends from going too far. The line for him was simple. Might our actions hurt others? Would this poorly represent our family, coaches, school, or team mates? Once after a big win at Kauai high, some of our team wanted to celebrate with alcohol. I thought it was a chance to be more accepted by the popular kids on the team. RJ calmly and thoughtfully convinced me this would escalate and end poorly. I didn't go because he helped me recognize why I wanted to go, and he helped me consider who I might harm in the process. RJ's moral compass has compelled him to confront injustice. He shared that he loved working as a prosecutor, but ultimately had to leave the office that had violated the trust of the public. In particular, he loved the challenge of prosecution and had great respect for the power of the reasonable doubt. He once shared a story of a case as a prosecutor where much of the story fit for a conviction, but in the middle of the plea, he noticed a discrepancy between witness testimony and tattoo features on the defendant. He knew, in his mind and heart they had the wrong suspect and he immediately approached the judge and told him he could not proceed with the plea and the case was dismissed. "I only wish I knew earlier" he said. The immediate concern for the defendant, and his duty to the victim drove his remorse. RJ has never been too proud to consider new information that in the pursuit of the truth. I am confident he will require the same humility of the legal teams representing clients in the district court.

Equally impressive is his ability to show compassion to those who do not share his personal values. Despite having his own set of beliefs, he approaches every individual with understanding and empathy. He recognizes that justice is not a one-size-fits-all concept and that the law must be applied impartially, taking into account the unique circumstances and perspectives of those involved. This compassionate approach enables him to connect with people from all walks of life and ensures that everyone who enters his courtroom will feel heard and respected.

What truly sets him apart is his deep love for Hawaii and his genuine concern for the people who call this place home. He understands the unique challenges and cultural nuances of our

community, and he embraces them wholeheartedly. His dedication to the well-being of the people of Hawaii is unwavering, and he consistently seeks to make our state a better place for everyone. He demonstrated this in his run for prosecutor after the previous office had violated the public's trust. He sanctifies the trust between the public citizens and our judicial system. These values will ensure that his judgments are fair, equitable, and compassionate to our citizens.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly support the appointment of my close friend to the Honolulu Circuit Court. His strong moral compass, compassion for people from all walks of life, love for Hawaii, and passion for justice make him an exceptional candidate for this esteemed position. I am confident that he will bring integrity, fairness, and a deep sense of responsibility to the bench, and that he will serve the people of Hawaii with the utmost dedication and commitment.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jeremy Kort

# STARN · O'TOOLE · MARCUS & FISHER

A L A W C O R P O R A T I O N

August 15, 2023

**VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION**

Hawaii State Capitol  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit –  
Robert J. Brown**

Aloha Sir/Madam:

I am writing to give my highest recommendation of Robert J. (RJ) Brown for appointment to the District Court of the First Circuit.

RJ was my classmate at the William S. Richardson School of Law. Our peers universally liked and respected RJ for his sharp mind, sense of humor, and genuine interest in helping and caring for others.

RJ has also been my colleague at Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher for more than five years, and he is a highly valued member of our team. He has excellent analytic and legal skills and is someone who works well with everyone, from his colleagues to opposing counsel. He has a warm and magnetic personality, which makes him a great team leader.

All of us at the firm are of the opinion that RJ has the attributes to be an outstanding addition to the judiciary. He has the appropriate temperament, strong work ethic, and innate ability to fairly evaluate and weigh situations. He takes great care to listen to and understand all sides to a dispute, and he treats all attorneys and litigants alike with respect and dignity.

RJ has also shown his commitment to advancing justice by serving as a Per Diem District Family Court judge since 2021, all the while juggling his professional, family, and personal obligations.

While I would be sad to lose RJ as a colleague, our firm's loss would be a gain for the people of Hawai'i.

Thank you very much for your consideration of RJ Brown for this appointment.

Respectfully,



Sara S. T. Strona

August 15, 2023

**VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION**

Hawaii State Capitol  
Senate Committee on Judiciary  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Hearing: August 21, 2023 at 9:00 am

**Re:   Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit –  
      Robert J. Brown (JC2)**

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

I write to express **strong support** and provide my highest recommendation of Robert J. (RJ) Brown for the District Court of the First Circuit judicial appointment.

RJ has been my colleague at the law firm of Starn O’Toole Marcus & Fisher for more than five years. In that time, I have come to know him professionally and as a friend. RJ is a skilled legal analyst - a deep thinker committed to excellence. He is charismatic but humble and a good listener. He has a warm and engaging presence that also commands respect.

RJ is well qualified: his service as a per diem judge, past service in the prosecutor’s office, and experience in private practice give him a strong and multi-faceted foundation. I’ve seen RJ tackle complex legal problems head on with energy, creativity, and intelligence. But, what stands out the most is RJ’s integrity, his heart for helping others, and his passion for public service. I have no doubt that he would be fair, thoughtful, and effective as a judge.

It is bittersweet for our firm to think about losing RJ, but we are so proud of him! I support RJ’s nomination wholeheartedly and believe his confirmation would be a great service to the people of Hawaii.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Very truly yours,



---

Lindsay E. Orman, Esq.

August 15, 2023

Thank you for allowing me to write a testimony in favor of R.J. Brown. My name is Bryan Sands, a friend and his Pastor.

I met R.J. when he, his wife and four boys started attending Kaimuki Christian Church when I was serving as Lead Pastor. With the Browns having four boys and my family having four girls all around the same age, it was an instant connection.

It was quickly evident that R.J. was an incredible father to his boys. He and Rikki (his wife) are fantastic parents, often seen playing with them, and raising them to be fun-filled, energetic, and respectful. I have found R.J. to have remarkable character, integrity, and to be extremely trustworthy. In fact, I would have no hesitation allowing R.J. to watch our girls without us there. I am proud that my girls call R.J. "Uncle".

We were in a small group together where a variety of topics would be discussed, some controversial and others not as much. Anyone who has ever led a small group of people knows there is usually someone who is going to share their unfiltered opinion every time. But that was never R.J. He is more concerned with the conversation, asking good questions, and seeking to understand other points-of-view. I witnessed it many times in that group, but even now when we get together R.J. will ask good, thought-provoking questions, listen intently, and to seek to understand. His heart is to build relationships and bridges.

From both Pastor and friend perspective, I see how that can translate into the courtroom. R.J. never once had an agenda in our discussions; rather, he would ask clarifying questions to be sure he understood, and then would only share if he felt he needed to add any additional thoughts. But those thoughts were always well-informed and well thought out.

From what I have observed firsthand—R.J. would make an outstanding judge. He is a loving, involved father and husband, he does not have his own agenda and he is able to remain calm, fair, and objective.

I highly respect R.J. and his family. I trust him, and I believe having R.J. as a judge, would benefit our island tremendously.

Sincerely,  
Pastor Bryan Sands



August 15, 2023

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF ROBERT J. BROWN  
BEFORE THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of Robert J. Brown for District Court Justice.

I have known RJ Brown for over twenty years, first as a high school teammate and friend, and now as a devoted husband and father.

RJ Brown would be an exceptional District Court Justice. He exhibits excellent temperament, self-discipline and a good sense of humor. He loves his family and is dedicated to their interests. He has routinely demonstrated his ability to analyze complicated issues and find resolution. He makes decisions that are just and fair. He is unbiased and impartial. He is intelligent, wise, and patient.

RJ Brown has the credentials, experience and wisdom to be an outstanding District Court Justice. I hope that you will consider placing him in this position.

Thank you again for the opportunity to address the committee in support of Robert J. Brown for District Court Justice.

Matthew A. Culver

Pua Lani Landscape Design, Inc

V.P. Operations

August 16, 2023

**VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION**

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair  
The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee

**HEARING:**

Date: August 21, 2023

Time: 9:00 AM

Place: Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**Re: First Special Session of 2023: ROBERT J. BROWN, Judicial Nominee to the District Court of the First Circuit (JC2)**

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and Committee Members:

I am writing to give my highest recommendation of Robert J. (RJ) Brown for judicial appointment to the District Court of the First Circuit.

RJ has been with my firm, Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher, for more than five years and I have known RJ since joining the firm almost two years ago. Having worked with RJ on a few matters, I can attest to his innate leadership qualities, strong work ethic, and warm personality. He is also competent, honest, and compassionate. He takes great care to listen to and understand all sides to a dispute, and he treats all attorneys and litigants alike with respect and dignity.

RJ is a tremendous asset to our firm. While I would be sad to lose RJ as a colleague, our firm's loss would be a gain for the people of Hawai'i. He is well qualified for this position and will serve Hawai'i well.

Thank you very much for your consideration of Robert J. Brown for confirmation to the District Court of the First Circuit.

Very truly yours,



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Cori J. Terayama

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/16/2023 10:08:35 AM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Elizabeth Spradlin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: I am a legal assistant at Starn O’Toole Marcus & Fisher. Over the past years I have worked with Robert J. Brown (known as “RJ”) as an associate with the firm. Prior to his work at our firm, it is my understanding that RJ was a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney with the City & County of Honolulu and is currently a Per Diem Judge at District Court. RJ has now been appointed as a full time District Judge with the First Circuit Court. RJ is a pleasure to work with and an exemplary attorney in all capacities. He is timely on deadlines and proactive on his case work. RJ is patient, considerate and professional, treats all team members equally, and is respectful and kind, even under the extreme duress that litigation can create. His intellect and case management has made him an invaluable asset to our firm. He is a dedicated family man. He is humble, modest, and a wonderful person with exceptional character who demonstrates a sincere concern for others and strong morals. He is a positive person with a cheerful personality. He is a man of more than words. He is passionate and dedicated to public service and committed to helping the community and making the world a better place by his actions. RJ would be an exceptional District Court Judge. He is patient, fair and genuinely cares about others. He will be a fair and respectful judge and great asset to the judicial system. Elizabeth Spradlin Starn O’Toole Marcus & Fisher 733 Bishop Street, Ste 1900 Honolulu, Hawai‘i 96813 808.537.6100

# STARN · O'TOOLE · MARCUS & FISHER

A L A W C O R P O R A T I O N

August 16, 2023

**VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION**

Hawaii State Capitol  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit –  
Robert J. Brown**

Sir/Madam:

I am writing to give my highest recommendation of Robert J. (RJ) Brown for the District Court of the First Circuit judicial appointment. RJ has been with our firm, Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher for more than five years and is a highly valued member of our team. He has excellent analytic and legal skills and is someone who works well with everyone, from his colleagues to opposing counsel. He has a warm and magnetic personality which makes him a great team leader.

RJ has the attributes to be an outstanding addition to the judiciary. He has the appropriate temperament, strong work ethic, and innate ability to fairly evaluate and weigh situations. He takes great care to listen to and understand all sides to a dispute, and he treats all attorneys and litigants alike with respect and dignity.

Aside from his impeccable work ethics, I highly respect RJ for his integrity, positivity, humbleness, humanity and genuine sincerity. RJ is also an amazing husband and father. RJ is one I would trust with my life! I'm just blessed to have worked with an incredible individual and now a lifetime friend.

Though selfishly I would be extremely sad to lose RJ, our firm's loss would be a gain for the people of Hawai'i.

Thank you very much for your consideration of RJ Brown as your next nominee.

Very truly yours,



Chantal M. M. Lactaoen  
Billing Coordinator

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August 16, 2023

VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION

Hawaii State Capitol  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit –  
Robert J. Brown**

Sir/Madam:

I am writing this letter of recommendation for the District Court of the First Circuit judicial appointment in support of Robert J. (RJ) Brown.

I have been a litigation paralegal in Hawaii for over 25 years. It truly was a pleasure and honor to have worked with RJ in various litigation matters at the law firm, Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher. He has always shown professionalism, compassion, leadership and dedication at the office.

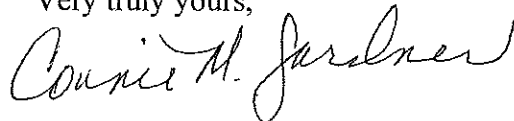
He is keenly intelligent, ethical, methodical, impartial and extremely hard working. RJ is also dedicated to his family and passionate about his community, which I believe is a true asset.

Through his experience as a deputy prosecuting attorney and litigator, RJ has earned the respect of attorneys, staff and the people of Hawaii. RJ is extremely well-qualified to serve as a District Court Judge of the First Circuit.

We would all miss RJ's presence in the office, but know he has all of the attributes necessary for capably discharging the duties of a district court judge.

Thank you very much for your consideration of RJ Brown as your next nominee.

Very truly yours,



Connie M. Gardner

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08.16.2023 | HONOLULU, HI

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee,

It is an absolute pleasure of mine to offer this letter of support and recommendation for Robert J. Brown to serve as a judge in the District Court of the First Circuit. I have had the distinguished privilege of knowing Mr. Brown for over 10 years. As a first generation immigrant in the great United States I have found Mr. Brown to be a man of undeniable eminent character, reinforcing my belief what core values should be for an upstanding citizen. His love for this country, devotion to his community, and above all his dedication to his family makes him an outstanding outlier to serve as a pillar of the District Court.

Mr. Brown has been part of the legal community since 2014 and to hear him speak of his devotion on upholding the law or his dedication to justice is inspirational and drives any individual into a hopeful and optimistic future. It is honorable individuals like him that give the rest of us hope for a brighter future during these perplexed and pioneer times.

I believe that Mr. Brown would be an exemplary addition to The District Court of the First Circuit in the Island of O'ahu.

Thank you for you time.

Respectfully,

Artur Hoxha

808.726.1124

[Artur.Hoxha@TommyBahama.com](mailto:Artur.Hoxha@TommyBahama.com)

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To the Esteemed Members of the Hawai'i State Legislature,

I am writing to convey my strong support for Robert J. ("RJ") Brown to fill the vacancy of District Court Judge of the First Circuit on O'ahu.

I have known RJ since we were both in law school at WSRSL. While his academic and professional accomplishments speak for themselves, I wish to convey an important aspect of his character that is perhaps less public: his profound sense of justice that has guided his professional and personal life.

I first met RJ at The Innocence Project while in law school. On the first day of class, our professors asked our small group why we had joined the clinic. Most students—myself included—responded with predictable answers: they were interested in criminal procedure, they wanted to do some good for those in need, or they just needed the academic credits. RJ, however, responded with such a deeply thoughtful response that—even now, a decade later—I still find myself reflecting upon it. He said that he hoped to serve the public either as judge or prosecutor one day, but to do so, he felt compelled to learn firsthand how these offices can sometimes "get it wrong." No one is above ego, he said, and fairness is a value that must be cultivated by looking at all sides. It was clear to me then—over a decade ago—that he had the heart of a true public servant.

More than any other WSRSL graduate that I have known (with the sole exception of my wife), RJ is deeply driven by a sense of justice. RJ's academic merit, interpersonal charm, and ethical compass will serve the Judiciary, and by extension the people of Hawai'i, extraordinarily well.

I offer my overwhelming support for his candidacy.

Very respectfully,

Tom Villalón

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/17/2023 8:21:13 AM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Loren E. Haugen	Individual	Comments Only	Written Testimony Only

Comments: I am respectfully submitting testimony in support of First Circuit, Judicial Nominee Robert J. Brown (Nominee Brown). In the ten (10) plus years that I have known nominee Brown, I have always found him to be extremely competent and levelheaded when making any type of legal decision. Nominee Brown possesses the necessary legal knowledge and experience to fill this role as a representative of this state's judiciary. From reporting with Civil Beat, to public service as a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, to civil work as an Associate for the Law firm of Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher, and most recently as a Per Diem Judge in the Family Court of the First Circuit. These separate and distinct experiences will be what nominee Brown will draw from, to be a sensible and capable District Court of the First Circuit Judge.



**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/17/2023 9:10:45 AM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michael Kaya	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: I met Robert “RJ” Brown at the suggestion of a mutual friend while he was running for Honolulu Prosecutor. Unfortunately sometimes those who run for public office are either unqualified or motivated by reasons that are not readily apparent. For these reasons I wasn’t sure what to expect. However I was pleasantly surprised and immediately taken by RJ’s qualities which are not often all found in the same person much less at such high levels. His intelligence and acumen far exceed what a written resume can detail. His honesty, sincerity and especially his passion for the law and this community are second to none. All of these are highlighted by the fact that Mr. Brown has the uncanny ability to connect and communicate with people from all walks of life. My most vivid memory of our first meeting was that a person running for Prosecuting Attorney staunchly maintained that even heinous criminals are “entitled to a vigorous defense.” As a retired sergeant of the Honolulu Police Department, I understood the importance of that belief and appreciated his integrity. Over the years our conversations have covered everything from legal and societal issues to mere sports. RJ and I do not always agree however I appreciate and admire his ability to listen, discuss and/or argue objectively without taking or making things personal. The legislature has the tough task of trying to determine whether the appointees are worthy of confirmation without much information to base their decision. I wish the legislature had the opportunity to sit down and talk with Mr. Brown to get a feel for his unique balance of compassion and practicality. I am confident he will be able to navigate the black and white of written law when it is applied in shades of gray in the real world. I do not provide testimony or letters of recommendation often nor do I take this opportunity lightly. Similarly, I understand that a judgeship has a wide and significant impact on our community and therefore considered this confirmation beyond my relationship with Mr. Brown. That said, I honestly feel that he is not only qualified and deserving but actually born to be a judge. In simple terms, Mr. Brown is a good person with the necessary attributes and sincere intentions for the people of Hawai‘i and the law of the land.

August 17, 2023

TO: Senate Judiciary Committee

RE: Judicial Selection Robert J. Brown

I write in strong support of the appointment of Robert Brown to the District/Family Court of the First Circuit.

Twelve years ago in law school, I recall being a shy 1L and listening to Mr. Brown, or “RJ” as we called him, answer questions. I was immediately impressed by Mr. Brown’s intellect, and the confidence with which he spoke. Prior to attending law school, RJ had been a journalist with Civil Beat. His experiences set him apart from other law students and made him stand out from the first day of classes.

In 2015, Mr. Brown and I became colleagues and teammates at the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney, and I watched him grow into a skilled and dedicated advocate. However, rather than focusing on obtaining guilty verdicts, Mr. Brown focused on doing what was right for everyone that he prosecuted and sought justice, in whatever form that it came in. He remained even-tempered and cool headed, even when cases became contentious, and treated fellow colleagues and opposing counsel with respect and dignity both on the record and off.

After Mr. Brown moved to civil practice at Starn O’toole Marcus and Fisher, I admired his tenacity and ability to adapt to an entirely new area of the law. Mr. Brown has become a well-rounded attorney, experienced in both criminal and civil practice, and with a strong grasp of legal principles and rules. Mr. Brown is now a per diem judge, and I have absolutely no doubt that he would make a phenomenal full-time District Court Judge. His patience, even temperament, and grace will serve him well on the bench.

I have known Mr. Brown for many years, and in many different capacities: as a classmate, colleague, and as a friend. Although Mr. Brown is without a doubt, a well-qualified and excellent attorney, it is who Mr. Brown is as a person that will make him stand out as a Judge. Mr. Brown is uncommonly kind, compassionate, and is a man of integrity. He does what is right, even if that is not always easy, and holds himself to the highest standards of morality.

I am grateful to write this letter on Mr. Brown’s behalf, and I whole heartedly, and without reservation, support his appointment as a Judge of the District Court of the First Circuit.

Respectfully,  
Leigh M. Okimoto #10217

**CHRISTOPHER D. CHWASTYK**  
7391 Ainanani Place  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96258  
(808) 214-9708 ♦ [cdchwastyk@gmail.com](mailto:cdchwastyk@gmail.com)

August 17, 2023

The Honorable Karl Rhoads  
Chair  
Committee on the Judiciary

Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 228

Chair Rhoads,

I am writing in strong support of Robert J. Brown's (RJ) nomination to the District Court of the First Circuit.

I met RJ in 2019, when he put himself forward as a candidate for the Prosecuting Attorney for the City and County of Honolulu, and I decided to support him for that role for the same reasons I am supporting him for the District Court. RJ is one of the most ethical, sincere, knowledgeable, and capable attorneys I have ever known.

During a career of over thirty years in politics and government, I have met hundreds of candidates for public office, elected officials, and attorneys. I pride myself on being able to differentiate between candidates and office holders whose primary motivation is their ego or the perceived power their position gives them and those whose motivation is improving their community and making their fellow citizens' lives better. Between those with an ethical lodestar and those without. Between those with integrity and those without. Between those who are knowledgeable and capable and those who are neither.

I would not have supported RJ then or now if I did not know absolutely that his ethics and integrity are without question, that he wants what is best for our community, and that his level of legal knowledge and capabilities more than qualify him as a prosecutor, attorney, or judge.

For these reasons, I strongly, and without reservation, support Robert J. Brown's nomination to the District Court of the First Circuit.

Mahalo for your service.

Sincerely,



Chris Chwastyk

# STARN • O'TOOLE • MARCUS & FISHER

A LAW CORPORATION

August 17, 2023

**VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION**

Hawaii State Capitol  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit –  
Robert J. Brown**

Sir/Madam:

I am writing to give my highest recommendation of Robert J. (RJ) Brown for the District Court of the First Circuit judicial appointment. RJ has been with my firm, Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher for more than five years and is a highly valued member of our team. He has excellent analytic and legal skills and is someone who works well with everyone, from his colleagues to opposing counsel. He has a warm and magnetic personality which makes him a great team leader.

All of us at the firm are of the opinion that RJ has the attributes to be an outstanding addition to the judiciary. He has the appropriate temperament, strong work ethic, and innate ability to fairly evaluate and weigh situations. He takes great care to listen to and understand all sides to a dispute, and he treats all attorneys and litigants alike with respect and dignity.

While I would be sad to lose RJ as a colleague, our firm's loss would be a gain for the people of Hawai'i.

Thank you very much for your consideration of RJ Brown as your next nominee.

Very truly yours,



Terry J. O'Toole

# STARN • O'TOOLE • MARCUS & FISHER

A LAW CORPORATION

August 17, 2023

Senate Judiciary Committee  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Robert J. Brown -  
Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit

To Whom it May Concern:

I am a legal assistant at the law firm of Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher.

Robert J. Brown has been an associate with the firm for more than five years and is a highly regarded member of the firm. Mr. Brown is also currently a Per Diem Judge at District Court with the First Circuit Court. Prior to joining the law firm, Mr. Brown was a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney with the City & County of Honolulu.

Although I have not worked extensively with Mr. Brown on cases, I have had occasional contact with him regarding certain cases, and have found him to be hard working and responsive. He works well with, and is respectful of, his fellow attorneys and staff in the firm. He maintains a positive attitude, a pleasant temperament and a cheerful personality. He shows a sincere concern for others around him.

Mr. Brown would be an excellent District Court Judge. He will carefully listen to, consider and weigh both sides of a case brought before him to fairly evaluate the situation. I believe he has the necessary skill to make the complicated analyses and tough decisions required of a District Court Judge. He will be a great asset to the judicial system.

Thank you for your consideration of Robert J. Brown as District Court Judge of the First Circuit.

Sincerely,



Bernadette A. Lee

August 17, 2023

**VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION**

Hawaii State Capitol  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit –  
Robert J. Brown**

Sir/Madam:

I have been a paralegal at Starn O’Toole Marcus & Fisher for over 16 years, and for the last five of those years I have been fortunate enough to work with Robert J. (RJ) Brown on some complicated litigation matters. He is intelligent, thorough, and humble.

RJ is both a natural leader and a team player who is able to remain calm and decisive during the stressful moments that litigation can bring. I’m always impressed by his ability to take charge and work a matter thoroughly and thoughtfully to its conclusion as well as his can-do attitude to always lend a helping hand during a crunch. He is a genuinely nice person who cares about people and doing the right thing.

Thank you very much for your consideration of RJ Brown as your next nominee.

Very truly yours,

**Gayla Evora**

Gayla Evora  
Paralegal

August 17, 2023

**VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION**

Hawaii State Capitol  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit –  
Robert J. Brown**

Sir/Madam:

I am writing to give my highest recommendation of Robert J. (RJ) Brown for the District Court of the First Circuit judicial appointment. RJ has been with my firm, Starn O’Toole Marcus & Fisher for more than five years and is a highly valued member of our team. He has excellent analytic and legal skills and is someone who works well with everyone, from his colleagues to opposing counsel. He has a warm and magnetic personality which makes him a great team leader.

All of us at the firm are of the opinion that RJ has the attributes to be an outstanding addition to the judiciary. He has the appropriate temperament, strong work ethic, and innate ability to fairly evaluate and weigh situations. He takes great care to listen to and understand all sides to a dispute, and he treats all attorneys and litigants alike with respect and dignity.

While I would be sad to lose RJ as a colleague, our firm’s loss would be a gain for the people of Hawai‘i.

Thank you very much for your consideration of RJ Brown as your next nominee.

Very truly yours,



---

Lauren K.O. Kagawa

Christine Fujino  
1137 Wilder Ave #802  
Honolulu, HI 96822

Hawai'i State Judiciary  
Hawai'i State Capitol  
415 South Beretania St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

August 17, 2023

Dear Honorable Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am humbled and honored to be given the opportunity to write this letter in support of RJ Brown, who has been nominated to serve as a judge in the District Court of the First Circuit.

I first met RJ eleven years ago, when he became



a Big Brother (through the Big Brothers Big Sisters Hawaii program) to my son Aydan. Aydan was just six years old at the time, but he already struggled with low self-esteem due to bullying, which was further fueled by his ADHD diagnosis that made learning difficult. As a mom, I could see that my baby boy was suffering, but no amount of online research or conversations with doctors and other moms provided me with the insight I needed to help my son. As a single mom, I did not have a partner to consult. I felt helpless, and a failure as a parent.

That's when RJ came into our lives. At the time, RJ was at the beginning of his journey to becoming an attorney. Though RJ must've been incredibly busy with all of his responsibilities, he met with Aydan regularly and never missed an outing. Very quickly Aydan grew fond of RJ and looked up to him; to be honest, so did I. Through these outings, RJ taught Aydan about self-confidence, ambition, the value of hard-work, and perseverance. Over time, Aydan started to build

his own self-confidence. With that, he developed ambition and was inspired by RJ to work as hard as he could (even though he may fail sometimes). If I say everything was smooth sailing thereafter, I'd be lying, but with every bump in the road, RJ was there for Aydan and got him through it.

Aydan and I are incredibly grateful for RJ. Without him, raising a little boy into a respectable young man would have been a significantly different experience for the both of us and undeniably much more challenging. I can confidently attest to RJ's honest, fair, and genuinely caring character. Especially now, amidst the trauma our state is inflicted with due to the tragedy in Maui and the effects that will surely follow, I believe now more than ever, we need someone like RJ in prestigious positions of influence like the seat of a judge in the District Court of the First Circuit. I truly believe RJ would be the absolute best choice.

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to share with you. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (808)687-1104.

Sincerely,

Christine Fujino

STARN • O'TOOLE • MARCUS & FISHER

A LAW CORPORATION

August 17, 2023

VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION

Hawaii State Capitol  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit –  
Robert J. Brown**

Sir/Madam:

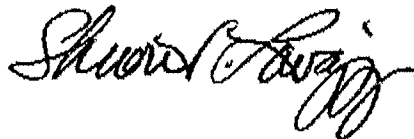
I am writing to give my highest recommendation of Robert J. (RJ) Brown for the District Court of the First Circuit judicial appointment. RJ has been with my firm, Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher for more than five years and is a highly valued member of our team. He has excellent analytic and legal skills and is someone who works well with everyone, from his colleagues to opposing counsel. He has a warm and magnetic personality which makes him a great team leader.

All of us at the firm are of the opinion that RJ has the attributes to be an outstanding addition to the judiciary. He has the appropriate temperament, strong work ethic, and innate ability to fairly evaluate and weigh situations. He takes great care to listen to and understand all sides to a dispute, and he treats all attorneys and litigants alike with respect and dignity.

While I would be sad to lose RJ as a colleague, our firm's loss would be a gain for the people of Hawai'i.

Thank you very much for your consideration of RJ Brown as your next nominee.

Very truly yours,



Sharon V. Lovejoy

The Law Offices of  
**JOHN W. SCHMIDTKE, JR.**  
*Attorney at Law • A Law Corporation*

August 17, 2023

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair  
Senate Committee on the Judiciary  
Hawai'i State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Email: [jdccommittee@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:jdccommittee@capitol.hawaii.gov)

Re: Letter In Support of Robert J. Brown's Judicial Nomination

Dear Senator Rhoads and Committee Members:

I write to give Robert J. Brown my highest endorsement and to urge the Senate to confirm his nomination.

Mr. Brown will be a star in Hawai'i's legal community.

I heard about Mr. Brown's exceptional trial skills when he worked at the prosecutor's office. Defense attorneys talked about the talented new guy with a command of the court. I had known he would be good at whatever he did in life because I met him when I coached high school sports, and I followed his football career in college. I heard him speak at his law school graduation ceremony at the University of Hawai'i. It is not often the best speaker is someone who has yet to pass the bar. Everyone that day knew we were listening to a future legal leader.

I appeared before Mr. Brown when he was assigned to the family court as a per diem judge. He controlled the courtroom with easy authority. He later helped a client of mine who had had civil cases that paralleled her family law case. He grasped the nuances of the complex cases instantly. His writing was clear. His courtroom presence was confident and warm, assured without arrogance.

Putting Mr. Brown on the bench gives Hawai'i a smart, kind, hard-working, and talented jurist for the next thirty years. Opportunities like that are rare.

Thank you for letting me comment. Please call me if you have questions.

Very truly yours,

  
John W. Schmidtke, Jr.

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/17/2023 4:43:18 PM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Raina Okamoto	Individual	Comments Only	Written Testimony Only

Comments: Don't know Mr. Brown personally but saw him campaign and was impressed. It's so refreshing to see qualities I admire (old school hard work, good work ethic, humble, genuine, sincerely cares about community)but with a twist & energy of the next generation. He's the type of representation that is needed to bridge and understand the different generations (baby boomers, Gen X, Gen Z etc.) in a fair and level-headed manner. Not many people have the skill set and demeanor to do that but Mr. Brown definitely does. I was so happy to see his name in the paper being appointed to District Court. I look forward to his confirmation.

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/17/2023 7:12:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tess Tynan	Individual	Comments Only	Written Testimony Only

Comments: I am writing to strongly recommend Robert J. (“RJ”) Brown for the District Court of the First Circuit judicial appointment. I have had the privilege of working closely with RJ as his legal assistant at Starn O’Toole Marcus & Fisher for the past 4 ½ years. RJ is very easy to work with, patient, and treats others with respect and dignity. Besides knowing RJ in the workplace, I see him as being a dedicated husband and father and value his time with his family. He is bright, energetic, kind, personable, and committed to being a public servant. RJ has the appropriate temperament, strong work ethic, and can fairly evaluate and weigh the facts. These attributes are important qualities for a judge. Although I am sad I will no longer be working with RJ, I am confident that he would be a great asset as a District Court judge and to the community. Thank you very much for your consideration of RJ Brown as your next nominee.

To whom it may concern,

It is with great pleasure to request your nomination of Robert Brown.

Robert is a hardworking, family loving man who always puts his family first. As his brother-in-law, I see it first-hand. Being a caring husband, and a father of 4 kids, I am confident he will make the right decisions in the family courtroom. He is constantly looking for ways to make a positive impact in his community while doing something he loves. He has expressed how judging fulfills both of those needs and more. I am positive that with his dedication and skillset he will prove to be a fine asset to your judge panel.

Sincerely,

Evan Fujioka



**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/17/2023 7:16:55 PM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
ELAINE MEGURO	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: I am writing to give my support for the nomination of Robert J. (RJ) Brown for the District Court of the First Circuit judicial appointment. I have worked with RJ at the law firm Starn O’Toole Marcus & Fisher for more than five years. He is a highly valued member of our team. He has excellent analytic and legal skills and is someone who works well with everyone, from his colleagues to opposing counsel. He has the appropriate temperament, strong work ethic, and innate ability to fairly evaluate and weigh situations. He takes great care to listen to and understand all sides to a dispute, and he treats all attorneys and litigants alike with respect and dignity. I commend RJ for his commitment to public service, both as a former Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for the City and County of Honolulu and a per diem Family Court Judge, and now his desire to serve as Judge for the District Court of the First Circuit. While it will be sad to lose RJ as a colleague, our firm’s loss would be a gain for the Judiciary and the people of Hawai’i. Thank you very much for your consideration of Robert J. Brown as your next nominee.

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/18/2023 7:15:22 AM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Henry Roberts	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: To the Honorable Members of the Senate, I am writing to express my strong support for the nomination of Robert J. Brown as a Judicial Nominee to the District Court of the First Circuit. I believe Mr. Brown's extensive legal expertise, unwavering commitment to justice, and exceptional character make him a highly qualified candidate for this honorable position. I have had the privilege of knowing Mr. Brown for several years in various professional capacities. His dedication to upholding the rule of law and his outstanding legal acumen have consistently impressed me. Throughout our interactions, I have witnessed his deep respect for the Constitution and his tireless efforts to ensure that justice is served impartially and fairly. Mr. Brown's extensive legal background, which includes years of practicing law in diverse areas, demonstrates his well-rounded understanding of complex legal matters. His analytical skills, attention to detail, and ability to approach cases with an open mind make him an ideal candidate to preside over the District Court. Moreover, his reputation for maintaining the highest ethical standards and demonstrating integrity in all his actions underscores his suitability for this esteemed position. In addition to his legal prowess, Mr. Brown's compassion and empathy stand out. He consistently displays a genuine concern for the well-being of all individuals who come before the court. His willingness to listen attentively and treat each case with the utmost respect and consideration speaks volumes about his commitment to ensuring a just and equitable legal process. I have no doubt that Mr. Brown's dedication, experience, and moral compass will contribute positively to the District Court of the First Circuit. His ability to approach cases with impartiality, his respect for the law, and his dedication to upholding justice align perfectly with the qualities we seek in a judge. It is with great enthusiasm that I wholeheartedly recommend Robert J. Brown for confirmation to the District Court of the First Circuit. I firmly believe that his appointment will be an asset to the court, the legal profession, and the pursuit of justice as a whole. Sincerely, Henry Roberts Founder of Jetxco

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/18/2023 8:42:08 AM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ryan Walters	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: I have had the privilege of knowing Mr. Brown for the better part of 20 years now. He is the most caring, kind, thoughtful, intelligent, and genuine person I have ever come across. While in college I used to beg him to run for president one day because of his leadership and outstanding moral compass. You will not be disappointed in your appointment of Mr. Brown.

# STARN · O'TOOLE · MARCUS & FISHER

A LAW CORPORATION

August 18, 2023

**VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION**

Hawaii State Capitol  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit –  
Robert J. Brown**

Sir/Madam:

I write to give my highest recommendation of Robert J. (“RJ”) Brown for the District Court of the First Circuit judicial appointment.

I have worked with RJ on many cases in the five years he has been with our firm, Starn O’Toole Marcus & Fisher. For the first year he worked at the firm, 90% of RJ’s work was with me, so I know him well. We continue to work on matters together. RJ works well with everyone, from colleagues to opposing counsel—and has a way of making friends with opposing counsel on even the most contentious cases. Within the firm, RJ’s warmth, kindness, and hard work make him a great team leader.

RJ is comfortable with witnesses and taking depositions, and his previous trial experience from the prosecutor’s office was evident in the work we did together both in and out of court. RJ has strong analytic skills and his writing—which has developed significantly while with our firm—is crisp and clean. His background in the prosecutor’s office which gave him extensive court room experience, coupled with time in complex civil practice honing his analytic, writing and team building skills, make him uniquely skilled to be a judge.

RJ’s character—his temperament, strong work ethic, innate ability to fairly evaluate and weigh situations—are what we want in our judges. And perhaps most importantly, RJ is a man of great integrity.

I would be sad to lose RJ as a colleague, but he would be a great judge.

Very truly yours,



---

Trevor A. Brown

Pacific Guardian Center, Makai Tower – 733 Bishop Street, Suite 1900 – Honolulu, HI 96813  
Telephone: (808) 537-6100 – Fax: (808) 537-5434 – Website: [www.starnlaw.com](http://www.starnlaw.com)



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Direct Fax (808) 664-8600  
cfasi@chunkerr.com

August 18, 2023

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair  
and Committee Members  
Committee on Judiciary  
Hawaii State Senate  
450 S. Beretania Street, Room 016  
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: JC 2 Consideration and Confirmation to the District Court of the First Circuit, Judicial  
Nominee, Robert J. Brown, for a term to expire in 6 years—Letter in Support

Dear Chair Rhoads and Committee Members:

It is with great enthusiasm that I write to express my unconditional support of the confirmation of Robert J. Brown to serve as Judge in the District Court of the First Circuit.

I have known Mr. Brown for over twelve years as a law school classmate, friend, co-worker and highly competent attorney.

One of Mr. Brown's most commendable cornerstone values is his unwavering commitment to treating everyone with impartiality and fairness. Regardless of a person's background, status or circumstance, Mr. Brown has consistently displayed a profound belief in the principle that justice should be blind and unbiased, and that everyone deserves equal consideration and respect under the law.

Importantly, Mr. Brown demonstrates a proficiency in appropriately and correctly applying the law. His legal acumen and diligent and methodical approach have warranted his achievements as a deputy prosecutor and a practitioner in private practice.

I firmly believe that Robert is an exceptional candidate to serve the people of Hawaii as a judge in the State judiciary. I wholeheartedly support the appointment of Robert J. Brown to the position of Judge for the District Court of the First Circuit and humbly ask that you do as well. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Very truly yours,

Charles F. Fasi II  
Attorney at Law

17 August 2023

Bryan S. Kim, Lt Col  
United States Air Force  
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APO, AE 09752  
Int'l Mobile: +31-6-2135-1394  
WhatsApp: 808-636-6564  
Email: [bryan.kim@jfcbs.nato.int](mailto:bryan.kim@jfcbs.nato.int)

RE: Testimony for Judicial Nominee, ROBERT J. BROWN, to the District Court of the First Circuit (JC 2)

Aloha,

Thank you for considering my testimony for the judicial nominee, ROBERT J. BROWN aka "RJ".

I have known RJ since 2020 while I was serving on active duty military orders at U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Headquarters in Aiea, HI. We met through a mutual friend and immediately RJ and his family befriended us with their tremendous kindness and hospitality, especially as my family and I were so far away from our support network on the mainland. During our frequent family gatherings over the years, I have spent many hours in his company and had the opportunity to see RJ in his personal home setting. I was able to witness his character and values in the way he serves his spouse, four children, extended family members, and friends. These qualities extend into his strong work ethic and dedication to his professional responsibilities. It is easy to see his unwavering commitment and desire to give back to the local community he cherishes, in a fair and impartial way.

It is with my greatest pleasure and confidence that I provide my testimony regarding ROBERT J. BROWN to the Senate Judiciary Committee. I know that RJ truly considers this appointment as a privilege of a lifetime to engage in work he believes in, and humbled by this opportunity to perform a role that fulfills him beyond explanation.

If you have any additional questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at [bryan.kim@jfcbs.nato.int](mailto:bryan.kim@jfcbs.nato.int) or (808) 636-6564.

Sincerely,

Bryan S. Kim, Lt Col  
United States Air Force

August 18, 2023

**VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION**

Hawaii State Capitol  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit –  
Robert J. Brown**

Sir/Madam:

I am writing to wholeheartedly recommend my colleague and friend Robert J. (RJ) Brown for the judicial appointment to the District Court of the First Circuit. I have had the distinct privilege of knowing and working closely with RJ for five years and have been consistently impressed by his exceptional legal acumen, unwavering dedication to justice, and impeccable character.

RJ has consistently demonstrated an unparalleled commitment to upholding the law and promoting fairness within our legal system. As a colleague and a friend, I have had the opportunity to witness firsthand his remarkable ability to analyze complex legal issues with precision and insight.

RJ's interpersonal skills are equally commendable. His empathetic and compassionate nature allows him to connect with people from all walks of life, making him an exceptional candidate for a judicial position. He possesses a unique ability to listen attentively, treat all individuals with respect, and maintain the utmost professionalism even in challenging situations.

It is with great enthusiasm that I recommend RJ. I am confident that his exceptional qualifications, unwavering commitment to justice, and exceptional moral character make him an ideal candidate for this important role. I have no doubt that he will continue to serve with distinction, upholding the principles of justice and fairness that our legal system holds dear.

While I would be sad to lose RJ as a colleague, our firm's loss would be a gain for the people of Hawai'i. I will be attending RJ's hearing on August 21, 2023 and would be happy to provide oral testimony as well if that may be helpful.

Thank you very much for your consideration of RJ Brown as your next nominee.

Very truly yours,



---

John W. Kelly

Young Scale Co., LLC  
1733 HAU STREET  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96819  
TEL: (808) 733-0788 FAX: (808) 733-5221  
Email: chris@youngscale.com



To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter in support of my dear friend Robert "RJ" Brown. Please excuse me if this letter isn't written properly as writing was never my strength. I did, however, grow up with RJ, so I have a unique perspective and insight into this man.

I first met RJ, freshman year at Punahou High School, I believe the year was 2000. My first impression was that he was a goofy, silly kid. He was very friendly, and it was easy to make friends with him. RJ and I have a special bond in that we both played Football. Not only that, but we were both Co-Captains of the Football team, both awarded Co-Defensive player of the year at Punahou, and both made it to the All-Star East vs West teams. We also travelled together to Pennsylvania for the UPENN football camp for High School players. We would work out together in the offseason as well. So, it is safe to say that I've spent countless hours with RJ, and here is what I know:

If I were to sum up RJ in one word, it would without a doubt be INTEGRITY. RJ was always the one who never skipped a rep in the weightroom. He was the one who always touched the line during sprints. This might seem insignificant to most, but to me, it is very telling of a person's character. No matter how easy or hard the task, he would complete it and do it the right way. This is something that I've always admired about RJ. He was the hardest worker in the room, but he never ran over anyone to achieve his goals. Again, always doing it the right way.

After High School, RJ and I were the only ones to try our Football hand at D1 schools. Me at UH, RJ at Colorado. RJ was never the fastest guy, nor was he the strongest. But for some reason he always overperformed. By the end of his college career, he was Captain of the Colorado Football team. As a former teammate, and a lifetime friend, that made me very proud.

Fast forward to today. To see how far he's come in his career and how he has such a beautiful family, brings me great joy, but it does not surprise me one bit. RJ is the same RJ I knew when we were a couple little squirts trying to chase a dream. The only difference is now he can focus his energy on the legal system. I highly recommend RJ be appointed to Judge with the District Court of the First Circuit. He will do what is right, not what is easy. Just as he's been doing for the 20+ years that I've known him. I honestly cannot think of anyone I know that would suit this position better. Hawaii would be a better place with RJ as a judge.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Shiramizu". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and "S".

Chris Shiramizu



**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/18/2023 5:16:36 PM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Roger J. Wall	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: I am writing to wholeheartedly and enthusiastically support the appointment of Robert J. Brown as a judge in the District Court of the First Circuit. Robert is one of the most outstanding people I know in our community. I have had the privilege of knowing him for over twenty years and have seen him grow into a hardworking and well respected lawyer and family court judge in addition to being a devoted husband and loving father. Robert has outstanding leadership and communication skills, is fair and honest with strong moral character. He is thoughtful and conscientious. I am certain he will fulfill the responsibilities of judgeship capably and most professionally.. Our community will benefit greatly from having a judge of his caliber ensuring Justice is properly served to all. I respectfully ask that you confirm Robert J. Brown's nomination. Aloha, Roger Wall, Vice Chairman, Foodland Super Market, Ltd.

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/19/2023 1:21:14 AM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Iolani Morikami and Ryan Leong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: Aloha to the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, It is an honor to express our strong and unwavering support for judicial nominee, Robert J. Brown. We have known R.J. for about a decade. He's attended the same college as Iolani - The University of Colorado at Boulder, and is the husband to Ryan's high school classmate, Rikki (Hartley) Brown. However, in the most recent years, R.J. has become more than just a friend, but more like a brother. He represented us in a legal battle against our landlord and even offered to do it Pro Bono. We know that he spent countless hours away from his family and with his own obligations to his firm, but no questions asked, he was willing to put in the time to help us, not as a client but more like family. His core values inspires us to do good and to do right. He dedicates himself to succeed at what ever he does and works hard no matter the obstacles. Whether it's being a loving dad, a caring husband, a workaholic, or just being there for a friend in need, he shows up and stands out. Our family can always count on him to be a shoulder to lean on no matter the time of day. R.J. is eminently qualified to serve as a judge for the District Court of the First Circuit. As you're probably aware of all of his qualifications, his decision to run for Prosecuting Attorney in 2020 in the primary election bears special mention as it shows his deep and abiding respect for the community and wanting to do better for the people of Hawai'i. Someone who genuinely cares and has no motives for personal gain. He is grounded in family values, has a deep love for God, and is committed to make positive changes for the State of Hawai'i . His life experiences, academic excellence and reverence for the rule of law clearly demonstrates that he's been preparing for this moment and he is someone we as a community could count on to get the job done efficiently and effectively. If you confirm Judge Robert J. Brown, as we urge you to, the State of Hawai'i will benefit enormously from his keen intelligence, impeccable integrity, even handed temperament, open minded and open heartedness and the many remarkable characteristics that reside in this extraordinary person. We humbly ask that our support will help him fulfill this dream of his. We are extremely proud of all of his accomplishments thus far and we're happy to call him our brother! Mahalo nui, Iolani Morikami & Ryan Leong

August 18, 2023

Senate Judiciary Committee  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

To Senate Judiciary Committee,

This letter is written in support of Robert J. Brown. I have known RJ for almost five years. During this time, I have come to respect RJ as a Husband, Father, Family Man and Friend. RJ is as a man of honor and integrity in all his dealings. RJ welcomes everyone with open arms and I can attest to that.

RJ and I first met at a family friends birthday party as our wives have growing up in Hawaii since grammar school together. RJ introduced himself and took it upon himself to welcome “the new guy”. He gave me the opportunity to prove myself with no preconceived notions as he does with everyone. Throughout the years we have continued to grow our friendship playing golf, running, boy’s nights and family get togethers. He has become a peer support for me on a business, personal and relationship level. He is an amazing sounding board that I greatly appreciate and admire the advice and direction he provides.

RJ treats his Wife and Kids with the upmost respect and love. He loves his Family not only through his words but his actions. He loves taking his four boys to the waterpark, kids city or the park to create memories and spend quality time together. He holds his family accountable, and it shows with their respect for the community and friends. Additionally, his peers have nothing but positive things to say on his dedication, hard work, and ability to overcoming obstacles with class and compassion. I bring RJ’s name up to acquittances in the legal world and everyone one of them, whether part of RJ’s legal team or opposing legal counsel, have positive words to express about RJ.

RJ lives his life with high standards and values in all aspects of this life. It is an honor to call him my friend and hope you take this into consideration when looking for our next leader and staple in not only the Judicial System but our Community.

With Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Elliott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" and the last name "Elliott" clearly legible.

**Richard Elliott**

Elliott Construction Group . Principle  
Kūkūlua’ana Management . Principle  
Handy Andy Hawaii Service Division . Principle  
Rescue One Restoration . Principle  
Pillar to Post Home Inspection . Principle  
Sure Step Hawaii . Principle  
c: 808.292.3908  
e: rle148@gmail.com

Senate Judiciary Committee  
August 19, 2023

August 19, 2023

**VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION**

Senate Judiciary Committee  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit –  
Robert J. Brown**

Aloha, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I first met RJ Brown more than a decade ago when he was a reporter for Civil Beat and I was at the Mayor's office. RJ was a good writer, always fair in his approach, and easy to speak with. For the past five years, I have worked closely with RJ on many legal matters. I have gotten to know him even better as a result. In my opinion, RJ has my highest recommendation to serve in the District Court of the First Circuit. He is organized and efficient, which are key skills for a district court judge. He is experienced in both criminal and civil law, and, due to his per diem time in the family court system, RJ understands family law as well. Most of all, RJ is an honorable, kind, and compassionate person, who treats everyone around him with decency and respect. These substantive and personal skills will serve all members of the public well if he is confirmed to the bench.

I have no concerns whatsoever about RJ doing less than an outstanding job. To the contrary, the community will benefit greatly from having him serve as a judge.

Thank you all very much for your consideration and for your public service!

Very truly yours,



---

Doug Chin

August 19, 2023

**VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION**

Hawaii State Capitol  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit –  
Robert J. Brown**

Sir/Madam:

I am writing to give my heartfelt and full recommendation of Robert J. (RJ) Brown for the District Court of the First Circuit judicial appointment. RJ has been with my firm, Starn O’Toole Marcus & Fisher for more than five years. During those years he has become a highly valued member of our team. In addition to superior analytic and legal skills, he has proven himself to be a conscientious and compassionate leader. He works well on a team, and garners respect from everyone with he works—on either side of the table.

In my personal practice, I have worked extensively at District Court. In my opinion, RJ possessed the qualities and disposition to be an outstanding addition to the judiciary. He works hard and is committed to excellent and thorough work. His personality and approach to the law (whether in oral argument, motions practice or mediation) is thoughtful and always civil. He has a presence that seems to induce calm and reason. He exhibits an inner strength, decisiveness and resolve that commands respect, and is no way offensive or off-putting. In my years of practice, I have only seen a few practitioners with this effect—and RJ is one of them.

While I would be sad to lose RJ as a colleague, our firm’s loss would be a gain for the people of Hawai‘i.

Thank you very much for your consideration of RJ Brown as your next nominee.

Very truly yours,



---

Stephanie E.W. Thompson

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/19/2023 10:20:12 AM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kainoa Higgins	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: Dear Senate Judiciary Committee, I am writing to wholeheartedly recommend Robert J. Brown for his appointment as a first district court judge within the state of Hawai'i. I have had the privilege of knowing Robert for over 20 years, having first met him during our high school years. Throughout our enduring friendship, I have had the opportunity to witness Robert's exceptional character, unwavering ethics, and remarkable leadership qualities. In reflecting on the years we have spent together, it is evident that Robert has consistently demonstrated a profound commitment to moral integrity and ethical decision-making. Time and again, he has faced challenging situations with an objective perspective, ensuring that his actions are guided by a deep sense of what is right. Robert's dedication to upholding the principles of fairness and justice has been a guiding light throughout his life. One of Robert's most remarkable qualities is his ability to lead and inspire those around him. As a leader of our high school football team, he exhibited a unique talent for bringing out the best in his teammates. He did the same while playing college ball at the University of Colorado, Boulder. His approachable demeanor and strong communication skills fostered a sense of unity and shared purpose, resulting in a cohesive and motivated team. These leadership qualities have remained a constant in his personal and professional life, making him not only a respected figure but also an individual others look up to. Robert's exceptional empathy sets him apart in his interactions with others. He possesses an innate ability to understand and relate to diverse perspectives, making him an effective listener and communicator. His unwavering commitment to valuing the dignity of all individuals, regardless of their circumstances, is evident in his interactions with both friends and strangers alike. Robert's capacity to stand in another person's shoes and engage in genuine dialogue showcases his empathetic nature. Throughout his professional career, Robert has consistently exemplified a strong work ethic and dedication to the betterment of the community. His involvement in various community initiatives reflects his sincere desire to contribute positively to society. Moreover, his diligence and commitment to upholding the principles of democracy and fairness are qualities that make him an ideal candidate for a role within the justice system. Furthermore, I would be remiss not to mention Robert's exceptional qualities as a friend, husband, and father. As a friend of over two decades, I have had the privilege of witnessing his steadfast loyalty, unwavering support, and genuine kindness. These qualities not only shine in his friendships but also extend to his role as a devoted husband and father. Robert's commitment to his family is a testament to his character and serves as an inspiring example to those around him. His dedication to nurturing strong relationships and creating a harmonious environment at home reflects the same principles of integrity and empathy that make him an ideal candidate for the role of a first district court judge. In conclusion, I wholeheartedly believe that Robert J. Brown possesses the moral and ethical fiber that is paramount to the integrity of our justice system. His character, leadership, empathy, and dedication to justice make him an outstanding choice for a first district court judge in the state of Hawai'i. I have no doubt that he will approach this role

with the same unwavering commitment and passion that he has consistently demonstrated throughout his life. It is with the utmost confidence that I endorse Robert J. Brown for this honorable position. He is not only a dear friend but also a paragon of integrity and fairness. I am immensely proud to have shared a friendship spanning over two decades with Robert, and I am confident that he will continue to positively impact the lives of those he serves. Thank you for considering my recommendation. Please feel free to contact me if you require any additional information. Sincerely, Kainoa Higgins Director - Tacoma School of Industrial Design, Engineering, and Art Best Friend

August 19, 2023

**VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION**

Hawaii State Capitol  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**Re: Judicial Nominee for the District Court of the First Circuit –  
Robert J. Brown**

Sir/Madam:

I am writing to give my highest recommendation of Robert J. (RJ) Brown for the District Court of the First Circuit judicial appointment. RJ has been with my firm, Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher for more than five years and is a highly valued member of our team. He has excellent analytic and legal skills and is someone who works well with everyone, from his colleagues to opposing counsel. He has a warm and magnetic personality which makes him a great team leader.

All of us at the firm are of the opinion that RJ has the attributes to be an outstanding addition to the judiciary. He has the appropriate temperament, strong work ethic, and innate ability to fairly evaluate and weigh situations. He takes great care to listen to and understand all sides to a dispute, and he treats all attorneys and litigants alike with respect and dignity.

While I would be sad to lose RJ as a colleague, our firm's loss would be a gain for the people of Hawai'i.

Thank you very much for your consideration of RJ Brown as your next nominee.

Very truly yours,



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Kari Noborikawa



**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/19/2023 4:06:48 PM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
scott tusa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: Dear Senate Judiciary Committee, My name is Scott Tusa and I've known Robert "RJ" Brown for nearly 15 years. As godfather to his oldest son Luke, I consider myself a close friend able to speak to the character of the man. RJ can be described with words like leader, reflective, virtuous, athletic, compassionate, accountable, motivated, team player and loving. Throughout our relationship I have sought counsel from him during difficult times as he provides measured and thoughtful guidance. I have worked with him in his run for City Prosecutor and witnessed his determination towards improving our community. In our younger days we enjoyed many social events and witnessed him engage all our peers as equals, treating everyone with respect. As his family grew, I observed him grow into a man, prioritizing the needs of his family over those of himself. When many in his position would have focused solely on the growing family, I watched him take on the Per Diem Judge position to be of service to our community. While I hope these words resonate, I am confident that given the opportunity, RJ will bring to life these character traits as Judge in the District Court of the First Circuit. I strongly encourage your confirmation of Robert "RJ" Brown to serve as Judge in the District Court of the First Circuit. Sincerely, Scott Tusa

To:

**Senate Judiciary Committee**

Date: August 18, 2023

I am writing this letter in support of **Robert J. Brown**, to serve as a Judge in the District Court of the First Circuit. My name is Alexandre Bugaj and I am VP of Development at Sip Systems Hawaii. Sip Systems Hawaii is the leader in the state for prefab and modular building, unlocking key roadblocks in the quest for affordable and sustainable building for future generations.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Mr. Brown for over 6 years both personally and professionally. Mr. Brown stands out as the most unwaveringly and reliably fair person I know. He is someone of extreme integrity, possesses strong morals and is always of service to his friends, family and community. I believe a true mark of a person's character is uncovered when presented with adversity or tempted to weakness. In situations I've witnessed, Mr. Brown steadfastly holds true to his morals.

I am proud to also call Mr. Brown my friend. He is someone who possess the capability for deep thought. His opinions are carefully considered and while we do not agree on everything, he shows grace regardless of the outcome. He truly cares about people and I think having Mr. Brown in this role within our community will have a positive effect.

I am confident that other letters written in support of Mr. Brown will also echo similar messages. I have no doubt that he is the person for the job and am happy to speak further on this matter should that be necessary.

Sincerely,

Alexandre Bugaj  
VP Development Sip Systems Hawaii  
3465 Waialae Ave. #280  
Honolulu HI 96816  
(808) 212-7882

Testimony of Titiimaea N. Ta'ase  
IN SUPPORT  
JC1 – Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the District Court of the First Circuit,  
Judicial Nominee, ROBERT J. BROWN  
for a term to expire in six years.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

August 20, 2023

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong **SUPPORT** of Judiciary Communication Number 1 and ask that you confirm Mr. Robert J. Brown to fill a position in the District Court of the First Circuit.

I am writing in my individual capacity but I currently serve as a Deputy Public Defender (DPD). I went to trial against Mr. Brown on multiple cases and every time I thought he was competent, well prepared, and fair. Even though we have an adversarial system, he was always easy to get along with and a good person.

I know he will bring all those attributes with him to the bench and I urge this committee to confirm his nomination.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony.

Titiimaea N. Ta'ase

Dear Senator Rhoads and Senator Gabbard,

I respectfully recommend Judicial Nominee Robert "RJ" Brown for confirmation as a Judge in the State of Hawai'i District Court of the First Circuit.

I have known RJ for over 20 years both personally and professionally. I have been fortunate to work with exceptional leaders throughout my career in the U.S. Department of Defense and U.S. Department of Justice. Without any hesitation, I can say RJ is simply one of the best leaders I have ever met. He is humble, honest, and compassionate. It is these same qualities that make him the perfect candidate to serve our community as a Judge.

RJ was named senior team captain of our high school football team because of his natural leadership abilities. He worked harder than anyone else, performed at an elite level, and was always respectful to coaches, teammates, and opponents. After high school, RJ walked on to the D1 football team at the University of Colorado. By the time he graduated, RJ had earned an athletic scholarship and was selected by his teammates as their team captain. He is that good. RJ pushes others to be better, he holds himself accountable, and he always leads by example.

If confirmed, I have no doubt RJ will approach his position in the Judiciary with the same level of passion, attention to detail, and professionalism he has demonstrated throughout his career. RJ will improve the practice of law in the State of Hawai'i by making those around him better. He will also be transparent and fair. RJ is a former Hawai'i State Bar Association Leadership Institute Fellow and has volunteered with Big Brother Big Sister Hawai'i for more than a decade.

Most importantly, RJ is a man of integrity whose character is beyond reproach. RJ and his wife are fantastic parents to four young boys. He is a family man with strong values, and he has the perfect temperament to serve on the bench. The State of Hawai'i would greatly benefit from a strong and passionate leader like RJ.

Thank you for your time and your consideration.

Respectfully,  
Rob Miller

# LAW OFFICE OF BRIAN S. KIM

A Limited Liability Law Company

August 20, 2023

## **VIA ELECTRONIC-DELIVERY**

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY  
Senator Karl Roads, Chair  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair  
Honolulu Hale  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Support for the Confirmation of Robert J. Brown to the District Court of the First Circuit (Oahu)

Dear Chairman and Members:

Please accept this letter as my sincere request that you support Robert J. Brown's nomination for the position at the District Court of the First Circuit.

Robert J. Brown is a professional colleague I met while he worked as a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney ("DPA"). Even early in his career as DPA, he clearly demonstrated the judicial integrity, character and temperament necessary for this position. He is kind, hardworking and thoughtful and I sincerely hope that you will support Mr. Brown's nomination. Thank you for time and your consideration.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Brian S. Kim

Brian S. Kim  
Attorney at law

**LATE**

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/20/2023 2:56:09 PM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Regan Iwao	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: I am submitting this letter in support of Robert J. Brown to be selected as a District Court Judge for the First Circuit, Island of Oahu. I am a partner at Schlack Ito and have been a civil litigator for 23 years (previously with Goodsill Anderson Quinn & Stifel). I first became acquainted with Mr. Brown in 2019 when we were representing separate defendants in a very contentious lawsuit, and was able to witness his skills as an attorney firsthand. I was impressed. Mr. Brown's deposition skills were superb. He was very fluid and articulate in his questions, and was able to focus on the important issues and obtain the relevant information from the witnesses. He was also able to maintain his professionalism and temperament when dealing with adversarial witnesses. His deposition skills will serve him well as a District Court Judge, as he will need to think and react quickly on his feet and sometimes deal with hostile situations. Mr. Brown's written and oral advocacy skills, which are necessary for any judge, are also excellent. Because we spent a lot of time together working on that case, I was able to get to know Mr. Brown personally and our friendship has extended beyond the conclusion of that lawsuit. He has always been honest, humble, eager, professional, courteous, fair, empathetic, and reliable - all characteristics that will serve him well as a judge. Respectfully, the judiciary needs more judges from the younger generations, and the time for Mr. Brown's services in the judiciary should be now. Accordingly, I wholly support Mr. Brown to be appointed as a District Court Judge and sincerely appreciate your consideration of my comments herein. Thank you.

**LATE**

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/20/2023 5:52:23 PM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Adrian Dhakhwa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: Please find this testimony in support of Robert J. Brown's nomination for a District Court of the First Circuit judicial appointment. He has the intelligence, work ethic, temperament, and compassion required for the position. I met RJ while he was a young deputy prosecutor. He was an excellent advocate for the community and not afraid of anything. He was willing to go to trial. In fact, he inherited a murder case at the last minute and was able to get up to speed on all of the legal and factual issues, ultimately securing a conviction that took a killer off the streets. There is no doubt that RJ will be a fine addition to the Judiciary. Please move his nomination forward.

The William S. Richardson School of Law  
Professor John Barkai

August 20, 2023

**Measure Title:**

**Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the District Court of the First Circuit, Judicial Nominee, Robert J. Brown, for a term to expire in 6 years.**

**Report Title: District Court of the First Circuit**

I am writing to support RJ Brown for confirmation to the District Court of the First Circuit, State of Hawai'i.

I have known RJ well since he was a student at the Law School, and have kept in contact with him since graduation.

I recommend RJ's confirmation for the position of District Court Judge.

PS: Apologies. You might have noticed that I submitted my letter for David Hayakawa at the link for Robert Brown. So, this letter for RJ Brown is being submitted to the Hayakawa link.

Sincerely,



John Barkai  
Professor of Law



**LATE**

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/20/2023 8:32:09 PM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Audrey Stanley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: I have known R.J. Brown for about a decade. He is smart, humble, honest, caring, compassionate, and patient. He has the qualities of an exceptional judge, and I have no doubt he will be excellent. He will be a valued asset to the judiciary.

**JC-2**

Submitted on: 8/20/2023 10:32:37 PM

Testimony for JDC on 8/21/2023 9:00:00 AM

**LATE**

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sheena Crail	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: I support Robert Brown's confirmation. He will make an amazing judge to the First Circuit District Court.



Testimony of the  
HAWAII STATE BAR ASSOCIATION  
relating to the nomination of

**Robert J. Brown**  
**District Court Judge of the First Circuit (JC2)**

TO: The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair  
The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Vice-Chair  
and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Rhonda L. Griswold  
President, Hawaii State Bar Association

Hearing: Monday, August 21, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 016 and Videoconference  
State Capitol

The Board of Directors of the Hawaii State Bar Association (HSBA) appreciates the opportunity to submit comments on the nomination of Robert J. Brown for the position of District Court Judge of the First Circuit.

The HSBA Board of Directors followed its multi-step process to inform the confirming authority of its findings on this appointment.

- Notification to the nominee of the HSBA appointment review process, which includes a questionnaire requesting educational credentials, legal and other professional work experiences, personal references; a resume; a copy of the JSC application; a form authorizing disclosure from the Office of Disciplinary Counsel of any disciplinary action; and an interview with the HSBA Board of Directors.
- Notification via electronic transmission to the HSBA membership of the appointment and a request for comments on the nominee.
- Appointment of a three-person review subcommittee of HSBA Board members by the President which serves as a neutral fact-finding body to: review documentation submitted by the nominee, contact references submitted by the nominee, review comments received from the HSBA membership, and conduct follow-up member contact for clarification, if necessary, for presentation to the HSBA Board.
- Submittal of a report by the three-person review subcommittee to the President, and subsequently to the entire Board.

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- Meeting of the President, the Executive Director, and the nominee prior to the scheduled interview of the nominee by the Board.
- Interview of the nominee by the HSBA Board.
- Deliberation of the HSBA Board to determine if the nominee is qualified or unqualified.
- Submittal of the HSBA Board's recommendation to the confirming authority.

The HSBA President and the Executive Director met with Mr. Brown on August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, to discuss the subcommittee's findings. On August 18<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Brown was interviewed by the HSBA Board of Directors in executive session.

Documentation submitted by Mr. Brown was reviewed and the references listed were contacted for their personal opinions and observations. The comments and letters received from HSBA members reflected an affirmation of Mr. Brown in all categories of the HSBA criteria which include:

- Integrity
- Diligence
- Legal knowledge and ability
- Professional experience
- Temperament
- Financial responsibility
- Public service
- Ability to fulfill the responsibilities and duties of the position.

The task of the HSBA was to determine the qualifications and suitability of the Nominee utilizing in large part, the judicial appointments criteria of the American Bar Association. The criteria are not ranked in terms of importance as it is used universally to review the qualifications of appointees for trial and appellate positions. The determination of qualified or unqualified is based on the totality of the documentation received, member and reference comments, and the interview of the individual appointed.

Judicial nominee Robert J. Brown, also known as "RJ", is a former journalist and Deputy Prosecutor. RJ is currently in the private practice of law and a per diem judge for the Family Court of the First Circuit. As a per diem Family Court judge, the Nominee has presided over matters pertaining to temporary restraining orders, paternity, custody, divorce, and Drug Court. As a civil practitioner in the private practice of law, the Nominee specializes in commercial and real estate litigation. He is also an Adjunct Professor at the William S. Richardson School of Law.

The Nominee is known for his unwavering integrity, diligence, and deep commitment to make a positive impact in all endeavors he undertakes. It was reported that as a Deputy Prosecutor, the Nominee focused on doing what was right for the parties and social justice. Though he had a successful career as a prosecutor, it was noted that a "winning" track record was never Mr. Brown's objective; it was justice for all parties. As a civil practitioner, the Nominee is known to be highly competent and diligent with unwavering integrity. Opposing counsel and judges note they have never had occasion to doubt his representations in the courtroom, in settlement, or pretrial meetings and other communications. Members reported that the Nominee represents his clients zealously and thoroughly but has never resorted to any underhanded tactics or tricks. Other commentators note that he is easy to work with, always prepared, and has the ability to master complex issues quickly and clearly.

After a review of all documentation submitted and the interview of the Nominee, which included dialogue and questioning relating to his background, experiences, and reasons for pursuing the position of District Court Judge of the First Circuit, the Board of the Hawaii State Bar Association found Robert J. Brown to be **QUALIFIED** for the position of District Court Judge of the First Circuit.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments for consideration during the deliberations and decision making of your committee.