

Corinne A. Beckwith
Nominee to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals
September 23, 2011

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I am greatly honored to appear before you today as you consider my nomination to be an Associate Judge on the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. I am thankful to the Judicial Nomination Commission for selecting me and to President Obama for nominating me. I would also like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and this Committee for holding this hearing and the Committee staff for all of the work that goes into making these hearings possible.

At the outset, I would like to acknowledge and thank my family and friends who are here and who are watching from home or from their offices. My husband, Brent Futrell, and my brother, Aaron Beckwith, are here with me today. And watching from Michigan are my mother, Alice Beckwith; my father and stepmother, Larry and Nancy Beckwith; my three other brothers, David, Joe, and Adam Beckwith; my sister-in-law, Chrissy Beckwith; my niece, Rachel Beckwith; and a slew of beloved aunts, uncles, and cousins who have encouraged me over the years. I also feel lucky to have so many friends and colleagues here today.

I grew up in a working class family in Michigan and was the first in my family to go to college. I pursued a career as a reporter at a small-town newspaper before changing course and attending law school at the University of Michigan. After clerking for two exceptional judges – Judge Richard Cudahy on the Seventh Circuit in Chicago and Justice John Paul Stevens on the U.S. Supreme Court here in D.C. – I began my legal career as a public defender in Detroit, handling a huge caseload of the criminal appeals of people who could not afford a lawyer. A few years later, I returned to the District of Columbia to join the appellate division of the Public Defender Service, and for the past twelve years I have practiced almost exclusively in the D.C. Court of Appeals, again representing indigent people facing serious criminal charges. Particularly given the high level of practice in the Court, serving the D.C. community in this way has been beyond gratifying, and it is my commitment to public service that now motivates me to seek appointment to the D.C. Court of Appeals – the Court where I learned so much of what I know about the law and good lawyering.

Because I have filed so many briefs and argued so many cases in the D.C. Court of Appeals, and because I have so much respect for the talented and thoughtful judges on the Court, it is an extraordinary honor to be nominated for a position among those judges, and I am truly humbled by it. Thank you, again, for considering my nomination. I welcome your questions, and will do my best to answer them.