



# APABA-PA

Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Pennsylvania

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June 21, 2021

The Honorable Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
United States Senate  
393 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-3805  
Via Email: [judiciary@casey.senate.gov](mailto:judiciary@casey.senate.gov)

The Honorable Patrick J. Toomey  
United States Senate  
248 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510  
Via Email: [judgeappEDPA@toomey.senate.gov](mailto:judgeappEDPA@toomey.senate.gov)

### **Re: Absence of Asian Pacific American United States District Judges for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania**

Dear Senator Casey and Senator Toomey:

The Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Pennsylvania (“APABA-PA”) is a non-profit organization founded in 1984 to advance the interests of the Asian Pacific American (“APA”) community as well as APA attorneys and law students in Pennsylvania, Northern Delaware, and Southern New Jersey. With respect to judicial matters, in conjunction with the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (“NAPABA”), APABA-PA monitors judicial appointments, promotes diversity on the bench, raises general awareness of the underrepresentation of APAs in the judiciary, and works to recommend qualified APA judicial candidates. APABA-PA is committed to ensuring that the judiciary is strengthened by and reflects the diversity of this state and this nation.

Currently, there are no APA judges on the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania or the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. Additionally, in the Pennsylvania state judiciary, there are only three active APA judges – two judges on the Court of Common Pleas in Philadelphia, and one Magisterial District Judge in Centre County. There currently are no APA judges on any statewide or appellate court in Pennsylvania.

The scarcity of APA jurists on the bench is in stark contrast to the APA population. According to 2019 Census Bureau estimates, nearly 4% of Pennsylvanians identify as Asian alone or Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander alone (an estimated 2.1% of Pennsylvanians identify as multiracial, but a 2019 estimate for the number of multiracial individuals who identify as Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander is unavailable). In the counties that make up the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, nearly 6% of the population identifies as Asian alone or Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander alone. In addition, the APA legal community is the fastest growing nationwide. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 5.6% of legal professionals are APA.<sup>1</sup>

It is imperative that the judiciary reflects the communities it serves. APABA-PA has sent you letters endorsing four highly qualified and experienced APA candidates for United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, and lack of qualified APA candidates is not an acceptable reason for the complete absence of APA representation among United States District Judges for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. APABA-PA and the undersigned supporting organizations will be extremely disappointed if none of the four current judicial vacancies in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania is filled by an APA candidate.

If you have any questions or need further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at [president@apaba-pa.org](mailto:president@apaba-pa.org) or 412-251-9931.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard Ting  
President, APABA-PA

Supporting organizations:

Asian American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Philadelphia  
Asian Americans United  
Cambodian Association of Greater Philadelphia, Inc.  
Chinatown Learning Center  
Korean-American Chamber of Commerce for PHL  
OCA-Greater Philadelphia  
OCA-Pittsburgh  
South Asian Bar Association of Philadelphia  
Southeast Asian Mutual Assistance Associations Coalition, Inc.  
The Philip Jaisohn Memorial Foundation, Inc.  
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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.htm>.