

May 20, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

Dear Sir or Madam:

I have known Judge Joan F. Kessler for in excess of forty years.

Joan Kessler served as the United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Wisconsin from 1978 to 1981. At the time, I was serving as the elected District Attorney of Milwaukee County. In several areas of criminal justice, the work of the offices overlapped and coordination was required. Ms. Kessler was a cooperative leader, always well informed, and quite knowledgeable in adopting strategies that best advanced the public interest. As the spokesperson for a high profile public office, she demonstrated sound judgment, reasoned approaches to criminal justice issues and respect for the various actors in the system. She was highly regarded by me and all who worked with her office. I felt fortunate as the local district attorney to be teamed with such a capable US Attorney.

After completing that service, Ms. Kessler entered private law practice with the Milwaukee firm of Foley and Lardner. This firm is acknowledged to be the best or one of the best law firms in Wisconsin. Ms. Kessler became a partner in the firm focusing her work on divorce and family law. The publication, *Best Lawyers in America*, cited her for her excellence in family law.

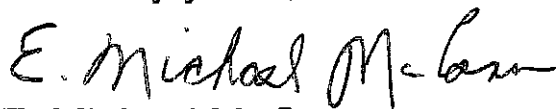
In 2004, Ms. Kessler was elected to the Wisconsin Court of Appeals. She was reelected to the Court in 2010 and 2016 without opposition. In 2018-2019, she served as the presiding judge of the Court. Judge Kessler's decisions and opinions were consistently well reasoned, scholarly, and consonant with existing law. Simply put, she was an excellent judge. She retired from the court in 2020.

Judge Kessler's leadership among lawyers is manifested in several elected volunteer positions she held. She served for a number of years on the Board of Governors of the State Bar of Wisconsin and for a period was chair of the Board. In addition, she served as chair of the Individual Rights and Responsibilities Section of the American Bar Association. These are demanding positions without compensation and reflect the generous spirit of those willing to so serve.

Judge Kessler and I presently are members of the Board of Directors of the Milwaukee Center for Independence. The Center is a substantial non profit agency employing hundreds of people in a challenging and professional endeavor to enhance the skills of young and older disabled clients to care for themselves and maximize their life potentialities and capabilities. Again, I witness Judge Kessler's sound judgment, the careful manner in which she considers issues, the attention she extends to the ideas of staff and other board members and the respect she garners from all associated with the agency.

Judge Joan F. Kessler's experience as a United States Attorney, a private law practitioner and as a Wisconsin Appellate Judge have immensely enriched her knowledge of federal and Wisconsin criminal and civil law. Her election and reelection as a judge reflect good public assessment and her election by lawyers to bar leadership positions demonstrate the high regard in which her peers hold her. Judge Kessler is a public servant par excellence.

Sincerely yours,



E. Michael McCann