

The Honorable Ned Lamont
Governor of the State of Connecticut
Connecticut State Capitol, 210 Capitol Ave.
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Lamont,

We, the undersigned organizations, write to you as passionate and committed advocates for justice, equality, and diversity within our judicial system. We commend you for your continued efforts at increasing the demographic and professional diversity of Connecticut's lower courts and urge you to use the upcoming Supreme Court vacancy to bring this spirit to the state's highest court.

We would strongly support the nomination and confirmation of a woman of color to the Connecticut Supreme Court, particularly a candidate who would expand the professional diversity of the court. As organizations deeply invested in the improvement of our communities and the enhancement of our democratic institutions, we firmly believe that the time has come to rectify the historical underrepresentation of diverse voices in our judiciary.

Despite gains in recent years, a Black woman has still never sat on the Connecticut Supreme Court. And as the UConn Law chapter of the People's Parity Project [reported](#) in 2023, the state bench is heavily skewed toward former prosecutors and corporate attorneys, with former public defenders, legal aid, labor, environmental, and plaintiffs' attorneys significantly underrepresented. Nationwide, only about 3% of state supreme court justices have any non-governmental civil rights experience. Even though judges strive toward objectivity, [empirical studies](#) have shown that judges' demographic backgrounds and professional experiences can significantly impact on their judicial opinions.

To account for this influence, it is important to increase the diversity on the bench. When courts do not reflect the diversity of the people they serve and our nation at large, the credibility in our justice system suffers. A diverse bench not only enhances the legitimacy of our legal decisions but also contributes to a broader understanding of the complex issues facing our society. Connecticut Supreme Court justices essentially determine what the law means in our state, and it is critically important that their deliberations have representation from all backgrounds to inform their opinions.

Reflecting on Justice Thurgood Marshall's contributions to the U.S. Supreme Court, Justice William Brennan noted that Marshall's experience both as a civil rights attorney and a Black man allowed him to speak from "first-hand knowledge of the law's failure to fulfill its promised protections for so many Americans." Acknowledging the importance of having judges with such

experiences, President Biden has prioritized nominating more judges with public interest experience to the federal bench, and we call on you to do the same here in Connecticut.

As the U.S. Supreme Court moves ever further to the right, infringing on the rights of ordinary Americans, state courts have become even more important defenders of individual liberties. Unless we start to balance the courts away from their current corporate and prosecutorial bias, we will never have a judiciary that truly works for the people. To ensure that we all have a voice in our courts, we urge you to commit to rebalancing the judiciary and prioritizing the nomination and confirmation of a candidate from an underrepresented demographic background and with experience representing individuals, so we can have the pro-people judiciary that we deserve.

Sincerely,

People's Parity Project
Alliance for Justice
American Constitution Society
Earthjustice
Impact Fund
League of Conservation Voters
Lambda Legal
Connecticut League of Conservation Voters
Good Trouble Advocacy
Urban League of Greater Hartford
SEIU State Council
CT Pro-People Judiciary Coalition