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October 1, 2020

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The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chairman, Committee on the
Judiciary
290 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member, Committee on
the Judiciary
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: S. 4711 Daniel Aderl Judicial Security and Privacy Act of 2020

Dear Senators Graham and Feinstein:

I write to you today on behalf of the Federal Magistrate Judges Association (FMJA), an association of active and retired United States Magistrate Judges, to urge consideration and swift passage of S. 4711. This measure would enhance the protection of federal judges' personally identifiable information (PII), particularly on the internet, and restricts the posting or sharing of judges' PII by private or public entities. In both civil and criminal cases, federal judges interact daily with disgruntled litigants or their associates who may wish to harm them. As you know, access to judges' PII online increases the threat and risk of future attacks on judges and their families.

The brutal attack this past July on New Jersey District Judge Esther Salas, which resulted in the death of her 20-year-old son and the critical wounding of her husband, was the latest in a series of fatal attacks on federal judges and their families. The Act is named in honor of Judge Salas's son. Threats against federal judges have greatly multiplied over the past five years. While each judge can review their personal security status and security procedures to help mitigate risks, judges and their families are also reliant on other federal agencies for their security at home and in the workplace. A comprehensive approach is required to address the security needs of the federal judiciary, and S. 4711 seeks to address this problem by implementing many of the recommendations authored by the Judicial Conference of the United States to bolster judicial security and deter future tragedies.

S. 4711 offers needed protections to a range of federal judicial officers. It provides a broad definition for PII that incorporates the personal information of judges and their immediate family members. It also provides needed resources to monitor and assess threats against judges, improve outdated security monitoring systems, and ensure adequate staffing for the agencies charged with deterring threats to the federal judiciary. The FMJA fully supports S. 4711's provisions and offers its assistance to the Legislative

Branch to respond to any inquiries or provide any other information in an effort to facilitate the bill's swift adoption.

The views expressed in this letter represent those of the FMJA as an organization, on whose behalf this statement is issued, and do not necessarily reflect the personal views of any sitting magistrate judge.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact me or Judge Alan Baverman, co-chair of the FMJA Legislative Committee, if you have any questions or need further information.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah M. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Deborah M. Smith
President, FMJA

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