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NATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION ENDORSES WASHINGTON STATE JUSTICE RAQUEL MONTOYA-LEWIS

Indian Country – September 29, 2020. The National Native American Bar Association (NNABA) endorses Washington State Supreme Court Justice Raquel Montoya-Lewis. Justice Montoya-Lewis, an enrolled member of the Pueblo of Isleta Tribe, is the first Native American to serve on the Washington State Supreme Court, and is one of three Native Americans to serve on a state supreme court across the nation.

“Justice Montoya-Lewis has served as an Indian law professor, tribal and state court judge, and now a Supreme Court Justice, furthering NNABA goals of increasing Native Americans in the judiciary and increased understanding of Indigenous communities’ unique cultural and legal issues,” said NNABA President Thomasina Real Bird. “Her leadership, deep understanding of the law, and tireless commitment to access to justice for all is an inspiration, and why we all must work to keep her on the bench.”

Justice Montoya-Lewis, who was appointed to the State Supreme Court by Washington State's Governor Jay Inslee and is running to retain her seat, said, “Having a voice at the table – and on the bench – for Native American communities, and other underrepresented communities, will ensure a thoughtful review of the issues at hand, now and in the future. I will continue to bring those lenses to our work on the Supreme Court as we seek to ensure fair and just outcomes for all Washingtonians.”

A national expert on implicit bias, Justice Montoya-Lewis has led workshops and taught other members of the justice system how to address implicit bias in the courtroom. She has also been a tireless advocate for juvenile justice serving on the Washington State Advisory Group on juvenile justice, the Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice, has been a member of the Family Violence Advisory Board for the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and the Judicial Engagement Network, and is a fellow of the Georgetown University Public Policy Institute’s Center for Juvenile Justice Reform.

Justice Montoya-Lewis is endorsed or supported by seventeen tribal governments in Washington State, along with many prominent tribal leaders. She has served as Chief Judge for the Lummi, Nooksack, and Upper Skagit Indian Tribes, in addition to her service on the Whatcom County Superior Court prior to her appointment to the State Supreme Court.

“Justice Montoya-Lewis is a leader for Indigenous attorneys and judges across the country. We are so proud to be supporting her campaign and are looking forward to seeing her continue to contribute to our communities through her thoughtful consideration of the law,” said Real Bird.

The National Native American Bar Association was founded in 1973 with the mission of advancing justice for Native Americans.

For more information on Justice Raquel Montoya-Lewis’ campaign, visit

<https://www.justicemontoyalewis.com/>

For more information on the National Native American Bar Association (NNABA) visit

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