

STATEMENT OF HENRIETTA WRIGHT, OF COUNSEL, GOLDBERG, GODLES, WIENER AND WRIGHT, AND CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, DALLAS CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER, DALLAS, TEXAS

Ms. WRIGHT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee. I am not here today to discuss—

Senator BIDEN. May I ask a procedural question? Excuse the interruption. Are they going to hold the vote for us?

Chairman SPECTER. The vote is scheduled to be held until 5 minutes to 4:00, so we are on a tight time schedule, but the answer is yes.

Senator BIDEN. The power of a Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. WRIGHT. I will talk quickly.

Senator BIDEN. No, no, no. Take your time. I just wanted to make sure.

Ms. WRIGHT. I am not here today to discuss Judge Roberts's judicial opinions or his political views. Instead, I hope to give you some insight into John Roberts, the man, whom I have had the privilege and pleasure of knowing for almost 20 years. The President could not have made a better choice for Chief Justice of the United States.

I am a life-long Democrat. I served in President Carter's White House, working for Sarah Weddington. My political views have not disqualified me from being in John's close circle of friends. He himself does not have a doctrinaire approach to life.

One of the things I have liked most about John is that he has always been supportive of women and aware of the many difficult choices that some of us have faced. As his wife, Jane, and I made the long march to law firm partnership and motherhood, he was unstinting in his encouragement. When Jane or I had successes in our Washington law practices, John applauded them. When my daughter, Sierra, turned 3 and I decided to become a full-time volunteer, he understood and supported the reasons for that decision as well.

John is definitely a man who respects smart women. His wife has two more degrees than he does.

John's support of Jane's work is constant and genuine. As but one of thousands of examples, recently when Jane's family in New York held a celebration on the same day that she needed to be away on law firm business, John dressed and packed the children for the trip, drove them to New York, and spent several days at Sullivan family functions as a single parent, thinking nothing of it.

John is truly a lawyer's lawyer. His intellectual curiosity, especially about the law, is immense. He and I are both long-time members of the American Law Institute and have been together at many of those functions over the years. As you have seen demonstrated this week, he is capable of intelligently discussing any area of law that comes up.

John is a very likable, congenial person, and the Court will benefit from his persuasive ability and tact. It is not a given that lawyers, especially super-smart ones, have good social skills. Maybe as Chief Justice, John can help the Court produce greater consensus

in its opinion. He will also bring a dry, often self-deprecating wit to the proceedings.

I laughed and groaned to see articles picking apart a flippant sentence John wrote when he was much younger about whether homemakers should be encouraged to become lawyers. I could hear the smile in his voice when I read these remarks and felt certain that he had found a way to tell a lawyer joke on himself.

How someone handles disappointments in life says a lot about them. John and Jane went through considerable effort and anguish to have children, sometimes wondering if, as prospective first-time parents in their 40's, it would ever happen. It took a long time to arrange the first adoption, and it fell through just days before the baby was due to come home with them. Rather than being angry or devastated, John and Jane remained calm and positive.

Career disappointments came, too. John's first two nominations to the Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit were not acted on by the Senate. For 11 years, he never showed any bitterness about it. Instead, he appeared to relish the challenge of his years in private practice.

John seemed perfectly accepting of the possibility that he would never become a judge. But if merit truly determined judicial appointments, it could only be a matter of time before he would be on the bench, and even on the Supreme Court.

What do all of these highly personal impressions of John indicate for this Committee's consideration of him as a nominee? I have known John in many unguarded personal, private moments. I can assure you and the American people that what you see here and the man I have known is the Justice you will get. John Roberts is smart, tolerant, collegial, of even temperament, and loves the law.

From my experience, John Roberts has no agenda other than to apply the law as it is written. It will be a great credit to this Committee and to the rest of the Senate for his nomination to be speedily approved.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Wright appears as a submission for the record.]

Chairman SPECTER. Thank you very much, Ms. Wright.

I have just been informed that a number of our colleagues have plane reservations, and they want to leave while we want to stay. So we are going to recess now, and we will be back shortly after the vote.

[Recess from 3:46 to 4:17 p.m.]

Chairman SPECTER. The hearing will resume.

The good news is that there are no more votes this afternoon, so we will not be interrupted again.

Our final witness on this panel is Ms. Beverly Jones, Lafayette, Tennessee, one of the two plaintiffs in *Lane v. Tennessee*. Ms. Jones is a graduate of Tennessee State University, is a certified court reporter, more than 15 years of court reporting experience. She has a mobility impairment, and she filed suit under Title II of the ADA against Tennessee, and she got the Court on a good day. It was 5-4 for her, unlike *Garrett*, which was 5-4 the other way.

Thank you from joining us, Ms. Jones, and we will be very much interested to hear what happened to you and your testimony.