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July 24, 2020

United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Graham, Ranking Member Feinstein, and Committee Members:

The National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) writes to express its strong opposition to the nomination of David Dugan to the United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois. Dugan's hostility to reproductive health, rights, and justice alone should be disqualifying.

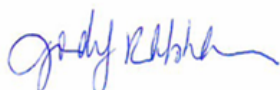
Dugan has indicated he supports restrictions on young people's access to abortion care and called young people seeking abortion care "presumably very emotional and maybe even irrational." He is a co-founder of Illinois Vision 2020, a group that aims to "end abortion in Illinois by 2020" and that partners with Illinois Federation for Right to Life. Further, as a self-described "supporter, volunteer, board member, and then president of, and legal counsel for, a large faith-based women's pregnancy medical center," Dugan has perpetuated medically inaccurate information through ThriVe Metro East, formerly Options-Now Medical Pregnancy Center. The purpose of this "crisis pregnancy center" is solely to discourage people from receiving abortion care, despite the constitutional right to abortion. Dugan has pushed the anti-reproductive freedom movement's false narratives about post-abortion care, saying of his involvement with ThriVe Metro East that he "became very aware of the wide and deep swath of hurt to the mother and her family that seemingly follows so many abortions. Not infrequently, post abortive women suffer both emotionally and physically as a result of their decision to abort."

Adding insult to injury, Dugan was a member of the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) from 2014-2016, a designated hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center. ADF's work includes funding cases and training attorneys about "religious freedom," "the sanctity of life," and "marriage and family."

As a faith-based organization focused on protecting and advancing reproductive health, rights, and justice, NCJW takes great offense at Dugan's efforts to mischaracterize abortion care and tout religious freedom. Religion should be used as a shield, not a weapon to demonize people including those seeking abortion care and the LGBTQ community.

It is clear that David Dugan lacks the requisite impartiality to serve as a federal judge. Accordingly, we strongly urge the Senate Judiciary Committee to oppose Dugan's nomination for a lifetime seat on our federal courts.

Sincerely,



Jody Rabhan
Chief Policy Officer
National Council of Jewish Women