



United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

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NEWS RELEASE

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Senate Confirms District Judge Ana de Alba to U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

SAN FRANCISCO – The United States Senate today voted 48-43 to confirm President Joseph R. Biden Jr.’s, nomination of District Judge Ana de Alba to serve as a circuit judge for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

Judge de Alba was nominated for the judgeship on April 17, 2023, and had her nomination hearing on May 17. Her nomination was reported to the Senate Floor on June 8. Upon taking her oath, she will fill a judgeship vacant since May 31, 2023, when Circuit Judge Paul Watford resigned. Once she has taken her oath of office, Judge de Alba will be the fourth Hispanic woman appointed to the court. She will maintain chambers in Fresno.

“Hearty congratulations to Judge de Alba! We are thrilled that the U.S. Senate has recognized her stellar qualifications and substantial experience as fully supporting her elevation to the federal appellate court,” said Chief U.S. District Judge Kimberly J. Mueller, Eastern District of California.

Judge Mueller added, “The news is bittersweet for us, of course, given that we lose a valued colleague and a wonderful judge from the federal trial court. But we also celebrate the special distinction that comes with Judge de Alba’s joining the Ninth Circuit: the Eastern District of California will now, with Judge Callahan in Sacramento, have a federal appellate judge with chambers in each of our major courthouses in Sacramento and in Fresno!”

Judge de Alba has served as a district judge on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California since July 2022, when she became the first Latina appointed to that court. Prior to her appointment to the federal bench, she served as a California Superior Court judge in Fresno County since 2018. Judge de Alba was an adjunct professor for the San Joaquin College of Law in Clovis, California, in 2021. She began her legal career in 2007 as an associate then in 2013 as a partner at Lang Richet & Patch, where her practice focused on employment, business, tort and construction litigation.

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Born in Merced, California, Judge de Alba received her Juris Doctor from the University of California Berkeley School of Law in 2007 and her Bachelor of Arts, with highest honors, from U.C. Berkeley in 2002. Since 2012, she has been a board member of the Central Valley Access to Justice Coalition. From 2017 to 2018, she was an executive board member of the California Lawyers Association. She has held numerous other board memberships including the Rape Counseling Services of Fresno, 2016-2018; California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc., 2015-2018; Legal Aid at Work, 2014-2018; Fresno County Bar Association, 2013-2015; California Bar Foundation (now California ChangeLawyers), 2013-2014; Central California Legal Services, 2011-2013; and the State Bar of California, 2009-2013.

In 2018, Judge de Alba received the Rape Counseling Services of Fresno's "Thank You" Award; Centro La Familia Advocacy Services' recognition "Honoring Your Passion to Protect the Rights of Workers and Families"; and the "Champion of Justice" Award from Central California Legal Services, Inc. In 2017, she received the Justice Pauline Hanson Award from the Fresno County Women Lawyers' Association Board of Directors, and the U.C. Berkeley Chicano Latino Alumni Association-Central Valley Chapter, Alumni of the Year Award. She has received numerous other awards dating back to 2011 including the California Young Lawyers Association's Jack Berman Award of Achievement for Distinguished Service to the Profession and the Public in 2012.

The U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals had 7,784 new case filings in fiscal year 2023. The court is authorized 29 judgeships, all of which are currently filled.

Appointed under Article III of the U.S. Constitution, federal district court judges are nominated by the president, confirmed by the Senate and serve lifetime appointments upon good behavior.

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