October 23, 2019

The Honorable Lindsay Graham
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: ABA Support for S. 2511, Legislation Regarding Security for Supreme Court Justices

Dear Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Feinstein:

On behalf of the American Bar Association (ABA), I write in support of S. 2511, legislation to permanently authorize security for Supreme Court Justices and their official guests when they are on the grounds of the Court and wherever they travel.

The ABA, which is the largest voluntary association of attorneys and legal professionals in the world, has long been concerned about court security. Our first comprehensive policy, adopted in 2005, recognized the need to periodically examine whether additional improvements or enhancements to judicial security programs are necessary and urged Congress to consult with the judicial branch and to provide adequate funding for judicial security programs. We commend you and your colleagues for advancing these goals.

We understand that S. 2511 was drafted after listening to concerns raised by Supreme Court security personnel. The legislation proposes two straightforward, common sense improvements to current law: it permanently authorizes the Marshal of the Supreme Court to provide security for justices and their official guests, and expands the authorization that currently only covers security within the states to include security during international travel. These changes will simplify the procedure for requesting security abroad, eliminate a redundant task for Congress, and assure that the Justices always have access to security.

The current authorization lapses on December 29, 2019. Given the year-end crush of must-do business awaiting the Senate, we urge Members of your Committee to support this legislation and report it to the Senate promptly.

Sincerely,

Judy Perry Martinez

cc: Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee