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March 10, 2020

Via E-mail

Senator John Coghill
Senate Judiciary Committee
Attn: Shawn Ayers
Shawn.Ayers@akleg.gov

Re: Letter of Support for Samantha Cherot

Dear Senator Coghill,

I am writing to provide my unconditional support of Samantha Cherot as Alaska's Public Defender. I intend to testify at tomorrow's confirmation hearings before the House Judiciary Committee and the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Ms. Cherot and I are former colleagues at the Alaska Public Defender Agency. (I have been in private practice with Ashburn & Mason for the last five years.) Ms. Cherot was identified as a rising star at the Agency from the moment she arrived. She worked in the criminal trial unit for approximately three years, quickly taking on higher level felony cases. Ms. Cherot set the bar with her trial acquittal streak, with her persistent presence in negotiating other serious cases to resolution, and in her unflinching dedication to mentoring younger attorneys.

As you may be aware, Ms. Cherot has a great depth of other legal experience. She was a civil litigation associate in California prior to returning to Alaska, and she has worked in private practice in Anchorage. Prior to her appointment as Public Defender, Ms. Cherot worked in the Agency's civil division, handling Child in Need of Aid (CINA) cases and other matters. Ms. Cherot performed the latter task while supervising various

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personnel at the agency. In my eight years at the Agency, I can hardly recall someone with the depth of leadership and practical legal experience as Ms. Cherot. Ms. Cherot is equally respected by judges, prosecutors, and clients, and has the temperament and serious intellect to navigate budgetary, staffing, and personnel issues that will arise in her new position. She is ideally suited to be Alaska's Public Defender.

Ms. Cherot is a natural leader, a compromiser, and a unifier. I recommend that she be confirmed without hesitation.

Sincerely,

/s/Jeffrey W. Robinson
Jeffrey W. Robinson