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January 29, 2019

Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of our three million members and the 50 million students they serve, we strongly urge you to oppose confirming Chad Readler to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit when the Judiciary Committee votes on his nomination. Votes associated with this issue may be included in NEA's Report Card for the 116th Congress.

Readler has long opposed free and equal public education. As chair of the Ohio Constitutional Modernization Commission, he pushed to eliminate the provision of the Ohio constitution that requires the state provide a thorough education for all students. As chair of the Ohio Alliance for Public Charter Schools, he argued against any oversight of charter schools despite their poor performance. For example, nearly 70 percent of students in online schools run by ECOT, Ohio's largest charter school provider in 2016, failed to log on for classes so often they were considered truant.

Readler has deep ties to for-profit education corporations that serve shareholders, not students. He served as an attorney for the Koch-funded "Buckeye Institute," a think tank that promotes school vouchers and for-profit schools in Ohio. He even opposed federal regulations that help keep for-profit higher education institutions from defrauding students.

As Acting Assistant Attorney General of the Department of Justice's Civil Division, Readler signed off on several extreme and cruel legal positions. He argued that state and local governments can be deprived of federal funds that benefit vulnerable populations when they exercise their right not to be conscripted into federal immigration enforcement. He argued that LGBTQ Americans can be discriminated against at work, when receiving public services, or when serving in the military. He defended the abhorrent practice of separating migrant children from their parents and not telling them when they will be reunited, including toddlers and babies who are still breastfeeding. As Chief of the Department of Justice's Civil Division, he signed the brief that argues against the Affordable Care Act's ban on denying health coverage based on pre-existing conditions — a position that has been condemned by legal experts across the political spectrum.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to oppose the nomination of Chad Readler to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association