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Senator Michael Johnson  
602 Gressette Building  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

May 31, 2023

Dear Senator Johnson,

I hope this letter finds you well. My name is Josie Duda, I'm 11 years old, I'm a girl, and I see that not a single person on the South Carolina Supreme Court is female. I don't like this new arrangement. In fact, I saw the SC Supreme Court when they came to York County last year and I was disappointed not to see a woman up there that day either. I don't think it's right that in all the 233 years of the entire existence of the SC Supreme Court there have been only two women ever on it. More than half of SC is female (about 52%) but none of the five Justices are. SC is the only US state without a woman on our Supreme Court. That does not seem right to me.

I don't think that this is good motivation for girls in SC. I feel that girls can't do some things because of our gender. What if I wanted to be a Justice on the SC Supreme Court but because I saw there are none now I give up my dream? What if in the future SC misses out on an amazing leader because of the court now? Senator Sandy Senn was quoted in the The Herald newspaper that she feels, "angry, embarrassed, and sad for our state." I feel exactly as she says.

I've made a petition and asked people to sign it if they feel as I do and they want more women in places of power alongside men. I first asked my 5th grade class to sign my petition and I realized that every girl that was there that day put down her name, yet not all the boys did. They think it's a competition, boys vs girls, when it's not. It's what is best for the people of SC. It's having people with different experiences - men and women - who have ideas about what is best for the people of SC. Yes, men have different opinions from one another but you need all different opinions from many different people, male and female, to find what is right.

You might agree or disagree with me about this topic. Either way does not matter to me because to make something better you need different opinions. Other people might love what I say, others may hate it. All that matters is that we have different ideas and we share what we think and respect other people's opinions. Tomorrow someone might write you a letter saying that they enjoy the new arrangement. They should be proud that they wrote it to you because they are sharing their different viewpoints.

Please think about what I have written. If you agree, please try to do something about it. I understand if you do not agree because we all need different opinions and I thank you for listening to mine.

I hope you have a wonderful day.

Sincerely yours,

Josie Duda