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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6275

December 9, 2020

Mr. James Duff
Director
Administrative Office of the Courts
1 Columbus Circle, NE
Washington, D.C. 20002

Ms. Emily Murphy
Administrator
General Services Administration
1800 F Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear Director Duff and Administrator Murphy,

I am writing to express my opposition to the closures of the Donald Russell (Spartanburg) Courthouse and the G. Ross Anderson Jr. (Anderson) Courthouse to provide for consolidation in the new Campbell Courthouse in Greenville, SC prior to a thorough review on how the two closures would affect the nature of legal proceedings during the COVID-19 pandemic, prisoner limitations for the respective courtrooms, and the impact on the local communities.

With regard to these three considerations necessitating further review, I would like to specifically highlight the following: The larger size of the courtrooms in Anderson and Spartanburg afford more space for social distancing, including greater suitability for multi-defendant trials, than the smaller courtroom footprints envisioned for the Greenville Courthouse. This is essential for the seamless operation of courtroom proceedings during the pandemic. In addition, almost all federal detainees are housed in the Anderson City Jail and the Spartanburg County Detention Center, not in Greenville. The closer proximity of these prisoner housing facilities minimizes risks, as well transportation costs. Finally, the communities of Spartanburg and Anderson—both of which are already suffering from economic downturn brought on by the pandemic—will incur great financial setbacks as a result of the loss of patronage local businesses and restaurants receive by the presence of the Federal courthouses.

Accordingly, I respectfully request that your offices initiate a thorough review as to the necessity of moving all operations of the Spartanburg and Anderson Courthouses to Greenville, SC. For additional reference, please see the attached letters. Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this request. Should you have any questions, please have your staff contact Lee Holmes on my committee staff.

Sincerely,



Lindsey O. Graham
Chairman

cc: The Honorable Dianne Feinstein