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NEWS RELEASE

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Hilary Lee Potashner Reappointed as Federal Public Defender for Central California

SAN FRANCISCO — Judges of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit have approved the reappointment of Federal Public Defender Hilary Lee Potashner of the Central District of California. First appointed to the office in 2014, Ms. Potashner’s reappointment to a second four-year term is effective June 30, 2019.

Ms. Potashner, who has more than two decades of experience representing indigent defendants, assumed the Office of the Federal Public Defender (FPD) on June 29, 2015. Prior to her appointment, Ms. Potashner had served as an acting FPD for the district since 2014.

Ms. Potashner has worked in the Office the Federal Public Defender for the Central District since 2001, when she was hired as a line deputy. She was promoted to a supervising defender position in 2007 and became the office’s chief deputy in 2012. Working in Los Angeles, she divided her time between administrative responsibilities, supervision, collaboration with other agencies in the district, and representing clients.

Ms. Potashner serves on a number of national committees, and she advises the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California on Criminal Justice Act matters.

Prior to her federal service, Ms. Potashner worked as a deputy public defender in the San Diego County Public Defender’s Office from 1993 to 2000.

A native of Redbank, New Jersey, Ms. Potashner received her B.A. in psychology and philosophy from Duke University in 1989, and her J.D. in 1993 from the University of California, Hastings College of the Law, where she received the Hastings Public Interest Law Foundation grant in 1991.

The Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Central District of California, which opened 3,830 cases in fiscal year 2018, is headquartered in Los Angeles and maintains branch offices in Santa Ana and Riverside. The office has an annual budget of \$40 million and 225 employees, which include attorneys, paralegals, investigators, and administrative personnel.

The Office of the Federal Public Defender was created by Congress to fulfill the constitutional requirement that indigent individuals charged with crimes in the federal justice system be provided with professional legal representation at no cost. Congress funds the offices of the Federal Public Defender through the Defender Services Division of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts.

By statute, judges of the court of appeals select and appoint the federal public defender for a renewable term of four years. The court makes its initial appointment after a nationwide recruitment and the use of a local screening committee pursuant to Equal Employment Opportunity guidelines. A federal public defender may be reappointed if the court concludes that he or she is performing in a highly satisfactory manner base upon a broad survey and performance evaluation process.

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