



UNITED STATES SENATE  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

BARACK OBAMA  
ILLINOIS

October 11, 2005

Mr. Chaz Guest  
5369 San Vicente Blvd, Unit 268  
Los Angeles, California 90019

Dear Chaz:

I want to compliment you on your terrific painting of Justice Thurgood Marshall. It is a stunning work, and I am proud to display it in my Senate office in Washington, D.C.

A few years ago, Vernon Jordan told a graduating class that, "You are where you are today because you stand on somebody's shoulders . . . and if you stand on the shoulders of others, you have a reciprocal responsibility to live your life so that others may stand on yours." One of the people whose shoulders I stand on is Thurgood Marshall.

Few people in American history have done more to ensure equal rights under the law than Thurgood Marshall, whether it was as an accomplished lawyer or the Supreme Court's first African American justice. But, despite his many qualifications and skills, perhaps the single most important reason that I have chosen to display the Marshall painting in my office is because of his ability to defy the odds. He rose to the highest court in the land, accomplishing something nobody thought possible except himself.

You have captured Justice Marshall's spirit and character with your painting. Looking at the painting each day provides me great inspiration and comfort. Thank you again for sharing it with me, my staff, and the people who visit my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Barack Obama", written in a cursive style.

Barack Obama  
United States Senator