

December 16, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

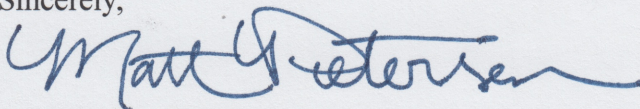
I write to inform you that I am withdrawing from consideration to be a United States District Judge for the District of Columbia. While I am honored to have been nominated for this position, it has become clear to me over the past few days that my nomination has become a distraction—and that is not fair to you or your Administration.

The United States District Court for the District of Columbia is unique, and I was looking forward to applying my experience in administrative and constitutional law on this court where regulatory matters and cases challenging agency action—rather than trials—dominate this docket within our nation's capital. As you know, I have practiced law for almost two decades—both in private practice and in public service. I have worked as an attorney in both bodies of Congress—and rose to the position of Chief Counsel to one of the most prominent Committees in the United States Senate. Nine years ago, I was unanimously confirmed by that body to serve as a Commissioner on the Federal Election Commission, where I also served as its Chairman. I believe that the hallmark of my tenure on the FEC has been and remains the fair treatment of all who have come before me and rigorous, well-reasoned opinions involving complex areas of administrative and constitutional law—similar to the kinds of cases that often come before judges of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. On that record, I was unanimously rated “qualified” to serve as a judge on this court by the American Bar Association, which rendered its decision based on my integrity, professional competence, and judicial temperament.

I had hoped that my nearly two decades of public service might carry more weight than my two worst minutes on television. However, I am no stranger to political realities, and I do not wish to be a continued distraction from the important work of your Administration and the Senate.

Accordingly, at this time, the best decision for me and my family is to withdraw from consideration. Until the time is otherwise appropriate, I look forward to returning to my duties at the Federal Election Commission. Thank you again for this tremendous honor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Matthew Spencer Petersen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Matthew" being the most prominent part.

Matthew Spencer Petersen