*Mary Jane Cobb*

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Dear Women of Influence Committee,

I am writing in support of Connie Ryan as an outstanding nominee for the 2019 Women of Influence Award.

I met Connie Ryan through her work with the Interfaith Alliance of Iowa and have found her to be one of the most genuine and caring people I have ever met. Her compassion for people drives her advocacy on their behalf.

I have watched as Connie has helped to grow the Interfaith Alliance of Iowa into a strong voice for tolerance and acceptance of all people. As a leader of this group of faith leaders she has worked tirelessly to protect our Courts from partisan political attacks. She has been the voice of acceptance when members of our community have been attacked because of their faith or other beliefs.

Connie was instrumental in founding the non-partisan *Justice Not Politics* organization which former Republican Lt. Governors Joy Corning and Sally Pederson co-chaired. She was also pivotal in the formation of the Moral Mondays group that meets during the legislative session at the Capital to shed light on important issues.

She is often a voice of reason and civility when much of the discourse around her can be divisive and harsh. She is a champion of people in every walk of life and is an amazing role model for citizens trying to make a difference in their communities.

Connie mentors women every day through her work whether she realizes it or not. She is generous with her time and talents and helps others to build their skillset and knowledge base. She is quick to give credit and praise to others and humble when recognized for her work.

I believe that Connie Ryan is a woman whose influence is felt across our community and know that she would be a wonderful addition to the list of women honored by the Woman of Influence recognition.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Jane Cobb

Executive Director

Iowa State Education Association