



PRESIDENT  
NAN ARON

CHAIR  
PAULETTE MEYER

March 8, 2021

The Honorable Richard Durbin  
Chairman  
Senate Judiciary Committee

Dear Chairman Durbin:

On behalf of the Alliance for Justice (AFJ), a national association representing over 120 public interest and civil rights organizations, I write to strongly support the confirmation of Vanita Gupta to serve as Associate Attorney General of the United States.

In recent years, Ms. Gupta has been a good friend and partner in the fight for fair courts and judges with a demonstrated commitment to equal justice and proper application of constitutional rights and legal protections. Given the importance of the position of associate attorney general to the cause of civil rights and proper enforcement of critical environmental, consumer, and other critical protections, AFJ could not be more pleased at the nomination, and ultimate confirmation, of Ms. Gupta. Ms. Gupta has spent her entire career fighting to make our country more equal and just. Whether as a lawyer, leader of Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, or as head of the Civil Rights Division at the Justice Department, she has been a true champion for justice.

The position of Associate Attorney General is the third ranking position at the Justice Department. The associate supervises the Civil Rights Division, Civil Division, Environment & Natural Resources Division, Office of Justice Programs, and other important offices. The associate is a critical partner with the Attorney General and Deputy Attorney in not only managing the Department but in ensuring proper enforcement of some of our nation's most important laws.

After graduating from Yale University and New York University Law School, Ms. Gupta worked at NAACP Legal Defense Fund (LDF). While working at LDF, Ms. Gupta led the effort to overturn the wrongful drug convictions of 38 individuals in Tulia, Texas, who were later pardoned by then-Governor

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Rick Perry. She then dedicated her work to racial justice at the ACLU, where she led the fight to make our criminal justice system fairer. In 2014, Ms. Gupta was chosen to lead the DOJ's Civil Rights Division. There, she worked closely with community leaders and law enforcement to advance policing that is fair and unbiased. She aggressively enforced our voting laws and important laws protecting LGBTQ communities, persons with disabilities, and prohibitions on discrimination in education, housing and employment.

As you know, the Justice Department under President Trump dramatically scaled back enforcement of critical laws, including civil rights enforcement. They derailed efforts to ensure constitutional policing, led an assault on Americans fighting for racial justice following the murder of George Floyd, and undermined fairness in the criminal justice system. They aggressively fought to curtail LGBTQ rights and laws that protect persons with disabilities. They exploited DOJ's position as the superintendent of our nation's immigration courts to advance an anti-immigrant agenda. They aided an assault on clean air and water and attacked protections for consumers.

For all those who care deeply about justice in this country and the important task of restoring integrity, independence, and commitment to equal justice at the Justice Department, Vanita Gupta is the right person to serve as the third most senior person at the Department of Justice. Her experiences in advancing civil rights, her integrity and judgment, and her skill as a leader and consensus builder will serve the nation well as she oversees the entire breadth of critical divisions at the department.

The Senate should expeditiously confirm Ms. Gupta as Associate Attorney General.

Sincerely,



Nan Aron  
President