

May 12, 2021

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Kristen Clarke, nominee for Assistant Attorney General of the Civil Rights Division

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

I am writing this letter to you and your fellow committee members in support of the confirmation of Kristen Clarke to serve as Assistant Attorney General over the Civil Rights Division.

I have known Kristen for over twenty years, having met her at Columbia University, where she pursued her law degree and I pursued my PhD in American History.

Kristen and I both worked part-time roles as student workers with Professor Manning Marable. As a tenured Professor at Columbia University, Dr. Marable taught, researched and spearheaded numerous conferences, meetings and symposia related to his research agenda. As students, our responsibilities were primarily administrative in nature in support of the work of Dr. Marable.

I especially want to provide context for Kristen's role with the journal *Souls: A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture, and Society* and the Race-ing Justice symposium, both of which I have heard referenced over the last few weeks.

In the case of the *Souls* journal, I served as an Associate Editor while Kristen served in a more junior role as Assistant Editor. The focus of our work was conducting research, coordinating logistical aspects relating to publishing each issue, copy editing, as well as obtaining photo images and/or photo credits. Neither one of us exercised substantive control of the written content or made decisions on speakers, themes, or viewpoints.

There were a number of people listed on the masthead such as Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee, Cornel West and Amiri Baraka. Their roles were honorary and ceremonial in nature, as were the roles of the other members of the editorial board.

Regarding the Race-ing Justice symposium, Kristen's role was logistical and administrative like many of the student workers who provided support for this conference. Our roles as student workers included assisting with travel and food while on site and doing what we could to ensure the panels ran smoothly, which may have included ensuring panel speakers made it to stage or even introducing speakers on a panel, but we certainly would not have been entrusted with leading or directing conversations.

I wanted to clarify that because of the limited roles we played as student workers, the views expressed by anyone Dr. Marable invited to participate with the journal or any of the symposia would not have been given a forum by any choosing on the part of students.

Ultimately, I hope you will allow Kristen Clarke's exceptional educational background, credentials, professional experience and proven track record of success be the criteria and guide which directs her confirmation as Assistant Attorney General of the Civil Rights Division.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter and please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Karen Jackson-Weaver

Dr. Karen Jackson-Weaver