

February 9, 2021

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

As an extremely proud son of Thurgood Marshall, our nation's first Black Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court, on behalf of our family, and in honor of my father's legacy, I write to strongly support the nomination of Kristen Clarke, President & Executive Director of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, to serve as the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. Ms. Clarke is a pathbreaking lawyer like my father, who built her career on advancing civil rights and equal justice under the law, and breaking barriers through her leadership for people of color while making our nation better for everyone.

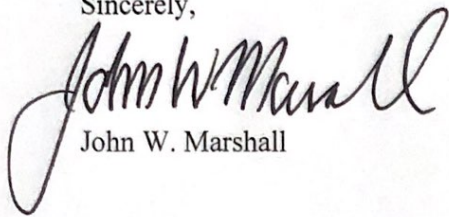
Following in the footsteps of my father, Ms. Clarke worked for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund (NAACP-LDF) after beginning her legal career in the U.S. Department of Justice's Honors Program. At NAACP-LDF, she co-led the Political Participation group, litigating across the country to protect the fundamental right to vote for Black people and other people of color. In this work, she worked to enforce the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and helped communities—particularly in the South—move closer to our shared ideal of equal participation and justice. These are the values that my father instilled in our family, and that shaped and defined every day of his legal career.

Through her work at NAACP-LDF and as the Director of the Civil Rights Bureau of the New York State Attorney General's office and as the President and Executive Director of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Ms. Clarke has utilized the law as a vehicle for advancing equality, as my father did. For example, she successfully represented Taylor Dumpson, who was targeted for a hate crime after her election as American University's first female Black student body president. In a historic ruling from the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, the court agreed with Ms. Clarke and the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law that racist online trolling activity can interfere with equal access to a public accommodation. It is cases like this one that exemplify Ms. Clarke's career of simultaneously pursuing justice for victims of discrimination and harassment, while also strategically developing precedent that bends the arc of the law towards justice.

Finally, it is important to reflect that Ms. Clarke would be the first Black woman—and first woman—ever confirmed to lead the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice. Ms. Clarke is eminently qualified to be the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, with a sterling and inspiring track record of success and impact. As in much of her career, she is chartering a course to break barriers that women and people of color—and especially women of color—have long confronted.

Thank you each for your service to our nation, and for your consideration of this letter, on behalf of the family of Justice Thurgood Marshall, in strong support of Ms. Clarke's nomination to lead the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John W. Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

John W. Marshall

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