

February 19, 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: Nomination of Kristen M. Clarke as Assistant Attorney General

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

We write, as former Assistant Attorneys General of the Civil Rights Division who served in Republican and Democratic Administrations, to urge the Senate to confirm Kristen M. Clarke as Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice. Based on our experience leading the Division for a cumulative total of 17 years, we find Ms. Clarke to be an excellent candidate from the standpoint of experience, temperament and commitment to the rule of law to fill this most important law enforcement post.

The Civil Rights Division is responsible for enforcement of federal civil and criminal statutes prohibiting and remedying discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, disability, religion, familial status, national origin, and other protected status. The Division's enacted FY 2020 budget of \$148.2 million funded a staff of 377 attorneys and 226 support personnel. The staff is divided into 12 sections generally according to areas of law enforcement responsibility – voting, employment, housing, educational opportunities, disability rights, immigrant rights, and criminal interference with rights.

The job of Assistant Attorney General is demanding. The core capabilities required include the ability, experience and will to set priorities and organize staffing and funding to achieve them, to select and inspire leaders, to set high standards for prosecution of cases, to assist Congress in enacting needed changes in civil rights laws, and to explain the Division's mission to the public.

Kristen Clarke has the background, experience, and personal qualities to perform the job of Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Civil Rights Division. She received an excellent education at Harvard (AB 1997) and Columbia (JD 2000). She has practiced law for 20 years, six in the U.S. Department of Justice, five in the Office of Attorney General of the State of New York, and the remainder with two private civil rights organizations. She would be the second confirmed Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights who began her career in the Division as an appointee in the Attorney General's Honors Program.

Ms. Clarke will bring to the job experience enforcing federal civil rights laws as a trial attorney in the Voting Rights Section and later the Criminal Section of the Civil Rights Division. She will draw on service in state government as Chief of the Civil Rights Bureau of the New York State Attorney General's Office. She has leadership experience with two of the nation's premier private civil rights organizations. From 2006 to 2011, she managed the

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NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund's voting rights docket and litigated voting rights cases. Starting in 2016, Ms. Clarke has served as President and Executive Director of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. In that post, she led and reported to a Board of Directors of over 250 of the nation's leading attorneys, supervised a staff of 100 attorneys and administrative professionals, and managed a budget of over \$10 million.

Kristen Clarke is the right person for this job at this moment in our country's history. She has had extensive public and private experience with federal civil rights law enforcement both in the trenches and in leadership positions. She knows the Civil Rights Division, having served as a line attorney in the Division for several years. She is a person of high ethics with a strong commitment to the rule of law.

We are pleased to recommend Kristen Clarke's confirmation as Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas E. Perez  
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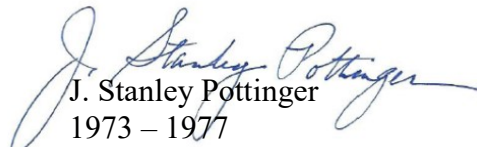
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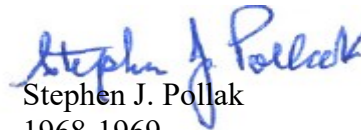
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