

February 1, 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 career attorneys in the Civil Rights Division of the U. S. Department of Justice to support the confirmation of Kristen Clarke as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. Our service extends from the 1960s through the period of Ms. Clarke's employment and up to the more recent past, in both Republican and Democratic administrations. We are convinced that Ms. Clarke possesses the legal acuity, character, and commitment to the mission of the Civil Rights Division to lead it successfully.

Since its founding, the Division has been assigned responsibility for enforcement of the nation's foundational civil rights laws, including those addressing voting, police misconduct, violence motivated by race and other forms of bigotry, education, employment, and housing. Its primary tools are civil litigation and criminal prosecutions, but it also pursues cooperative solutions and renders legal advice on civil rights matters.

Of particular note, while serving as a trial attorney in the Division, Ms. Clarke specialized in areas of crucial contemporary relevance. In the Voting Section, she enforced the Voting Rights Act to ensure that all qualified people could cast meaningful ballots and participate equally in the political process. While in the Criminal Section, she handled matters involving law enforcement officers who violated constitutional rights and individuals who committed hate motivated violence. These areas should be central priorities for the Division in the years ahead.

Ms. Clarke's career since leaving the Civil Rights Division has deepened and broadened her experience. Through her employment with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, her service with the New York Attorney General, and her leadership of the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, she has been involved in nearly every area of civil rights enforcement.

Her experience with the New York Attorney General has given her insight into state authorities, who are often the objects of Civil Rights Division enforcement efforts,

and has enhanced her ability to deal sensitively and persuasively with them. Her position at the Lawyers Committee has allowed her to demonstrate her leadership ability, her litigation skills, and her effectiveness as a spokesperson for a substantial organization.

Since its founding, the Civil Rights Division has been at the heart of the federal government's commitment to remedy past and ongoing discrimination and to move the reality of America closer to its majestic ideals. It has developed a culture based on rigorous investigation, careful legal analysis, honest negotiation, clear communication, and, when necessary, skillful litigation.

In our collective view, Kristen Clarke has the qualities to continue that culture and our nation's progress toward a more just society. We, therefore, strongly endorse her confirmation as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights.

Respectfully,

Joseph Rich, 1968-2005

William Yeomans. 1981-2005

Brian K. Landsberg, 1964-1986; 1993-1994

Robert Kengle, 1984-2005

Brian Heffernan 1978-2011

David Becker 1998-2005

James Tucker 1999-2002

Steve Pershing 1996-2005

Albert Moskowitz 1984-2006

Gerard Hogan 1988-2017

Gilda Daniels, 1998-2006

Luz Lopez-Ortiz, 2000-2019

Bruce Adelson 2000-2006