

February 17, 2021

United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin, Ranking Member Grassley, and Committee Members:

On behalf of the following 69 local, state, and national Jewish organizations, representing millions of members across the country, we write to express our strong support of Kristen Clarke for Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights at the US Department of Justice (DOJ).

A central tenet of Judaism is *tzedek, tzedek tirdof*, or the pursuit of justice. Indeed, for us, part of our Jewish identity is the imperative to care about the world around us and strive to make it better. We carry out this commitment as a community by ensuring we all have access, particularly the most vulnerable among us, to our civil and constitutional rights. This, too, is the essential mission of DOJ.

The Department of Justice is the nation's top law enforcement agency. It not only serves as a backstop for our fundamental civil rights, but as an entity for advancing fair and impartial justice for everyone in this country. The Department must be comprised of leaders committed to ending discrimination; addressing white supremacy and hate violence; and advancing racial, gender, disability, ethnic, religious, immigrant, and LGBTQ justice. As such, there is no better candidate to lead the Civil Rights Division than Kristen Clarke.

Clarke has spent her entire career dedicated to the pursuit of equal justice and civil rights. She is a deeply qualified and passionate civil rights leader with an unparalleled depth and breadth of experience, and is the leader our country needs in this vital role right now. At the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Clarke has worked to promote fair housing and community development, economic justice, voting rights, equal educational opportunity, criminal justice, judicial diversity, and beyond. Clarke formerly served as the head of the Civil Rights Bureau for the New York State Attorney General's Office, where she led broad civil rights enforcement, including the issues of criminal justice, education and housing discrimination, fair lending, barriers to reentry, voting rights, immigrants' rights, gender inequality, disability rights, reproductive access, and LGBTQ equality. Under her leadership, the Bureau secured landmark agreements with banks to address unlawful redlining, employers to address barriers to reentry for people with criminal backgrounds, police departments on reforms to policies and practices, major retailers on racial profiling of consumers, and one of the country's largest school districts concerning issues relating to the school-to-prison pipeline. At the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF), Clarke led the organization's work in the areas of voting rights and election law. Prior to joining LDF, she worked in the very office she now is nominated to lead. She served as a federal prosecutor in the Criminal Section of the Civil Rights Division, handling police misconduct, police brutality, hate crimes, and human trafficking cases. She also worked on voting rights and redistricting cases through the Division's Voting Section. Consistent throughout her distinguished career is a focus on strengthening democracy and ensuring justice.

As the nation grapples with the COVID-19 pandemic, Black, Latino, Asian, and Native American communities bear the brunt of its economic and health damages. Along with it, the fires of hate and discrimination stoked over the last four years have infiltrated our discourse, social media,

communities, and even Congress. The devastation of this moment compels us to reimagine what kind of America we want to become after the pandemic — one that is more just and equitable for all people. One where the Justice Department will not tolerate bigotry, bias-motivated violence, and discrimination.

To achieve that future requires leadership at the Department to ensure the safety of our communities and strengthen our civil rights protections. Kristen Clarke is the right person to defend and advance these critical values.

Given her life's work, Kristen Clarke will restore integrity, independence, and the pursuit of justice to this critical federal agency. **We urge the Senate Judiciary Committee to quickly confirm Kristen Clarke as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights.**

Sincerely,

National:

Ameinu

American Jewish Congress

Avodah

Bend the Arc: Jewish Action

Jewish Democratic Council of America

Jewish Labor Committee

Jewish World Watch

Jewish Women International

Keshet

Kohenet Hebrew Priestess Institute

Mitsui Collective

National Council of Jewish Women

Playful Resilience

Reconstructing Judaism

Society for Humanistic Judaism

T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights

The Shalom Center

The Workers Circle

State:

Jewish Community Action (MN)

National Council of Jewish Women Arizona

National Council of Jewish Women California

National Council of Jewish Women Colorado

National Council of Jewish Women Florida

National Council of Jewish Women Georgia

National Council of Jewish Women Illinois

National Council of Jewish Women Kentucky

National Council of Jewish Women Maryland

National Council of Jewish Women Massachusetts

National Council of Jewish Women Michigan

National Council of Jewish Women Minnesota

National Council of Jewish Women Northern Virginia

National Council of Jewish Women Tennessee

National Council of Jewish Women Texas

National Council of Jewish Women Washington
New Jersey Jewish Labor Committee
New York Jewish Agenda
United Hebrew Trades – New York Jewish Labor Committee

Local:

Bend the Arc: Jewish Action Pittsburgh (PA)
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action South Jersey (NJ)
Congregation Nevei Kodesh, Colorado
IKAR, Los Angeles (CA)
Jewish Community Relations Council, Howard County (MD)
Jewish Community Relations Council, Silicon Valley (CA)
Jewish Democratic Women's Salon Atlanta (GA)
National Council of Jewish Women Atlanta (GA) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Austin (TX) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Chicago North Shore (IL) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Cleveland (OH) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Contra Costa (CA) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Greater Dallas (TX) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Houston (TX) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Kansas City (MO) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Kendall (FL) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Long Beach (CA) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Los Angeles (CA) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Greater Miami (FL) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Louisville (KY) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Milwaukee (WI) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Nashville (TN) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Greater New Orleans (LA) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Palm Beach (FL) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Peninsula (NY) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Greater Philadelphia (PA) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Pittsburgh (PA) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Saddleback (CA) Section
National Council of Jewish Women San Antonio (TX) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Sarasota-Manatee (FL) Section
National Council of Jewish Women South East Atlantic (FL) Section
National Council of Jewish Women South Shore (NY) Section