

March 8, 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 46 local, state, and national Jewish organizations, we write to express our strong support of the nomination of Vanita Gupta for Associate Attorney General of the US Department of Justice. The Associate Attorney General holds the third highest rank at the Justice Department and serves as a principal partner of the Attorney General and Deputy Attorney General. The Associate Attorney General supervises the Civil Rights Division, Civil Division, Office on Violence Against Women, Community Relations Service, Environment and Natural Resources Division, Office of Justice Programs, and other critical offices key to the work of our organizations.

As Jews, we are guided by the idea of *tikkun olam* or repairing the world. This tradition drives our commitment toward a more just world — a commitment shared by Vanita Gupta, a proud daughter of immigrants from India who has fought for equity throughout her career. In her most recent position as president and CEO of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, Vanita Gupta built consensus within the civil rights community on key efforts including voting rights, the 2020 census, federal courts, and justice reform. Prior to helming the Leadership Conference, Gupta served as Acting Assistant Attorney General and Head of the US Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division. Appointed to this role of chief civil rights prosecutor for the United States by President Barack Obama, Gupta oversaw a wide range of criminal and civil enforcement efforts to ensure equal justice and protect equal opportunity for all during a consequential period for the division.

As Deputy Legal Director and the Director of the Center for Justice at the American Civil Liberties Union, Gupta secured a landmark settlement on behalf of immigrant children and created an effort aimed at ending mass incarceration while keeping communities safe. Gupta began her legal career as an attorney at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, where she successfully led the effort to overturn the wrongful drug convictions of 38 individuals in Tulia, Texas. Vanita Gupta is well versed in the law and issues, including policing, criminal legal reform, hate crimes, immigration, voting rights, and discrimination in education, housing, employment, lending, and religious exercise. She has deep experience partnering and working with a range of law enforcement agencies, corrections officials, advocates, stakeholders, and elected officials across the political spectrum.

If confirmed, Gupta would be the first woman of color in US history to serve as Associate Attorney General and the first civil rights lawyer to serve in one of the top three positions at the Justice Department. Quite simply, Vanita Gupta is the experienced litigator, coalition builder, and fierce champion for justice we need to bring a vital civil rights and racial justice focus to the Justice Department at a critical moment for our country.

Given her background and experience, Vanita Gupta would bring to the Justice Department a fresh perspective, empathy, and understanding of the ways our laws could better serve all communities. We urge the Senate Judiciary Committee to quickly confirm Vanita Gupta as Associate Attorney General.

Sincerely,

National:

ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal
Ameinu
American Jewish Congress
Avodah
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
Habonim Dror North America
Jewish Democratic Council of America
Jewish Women International
Keshet
National Council of Jewish Women
Reconstructing Judaism
Society for Humanistic Judaism
The Shalom Center
The Workers Circle
Truah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights

State:

Carolina Jews for Justice
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 Louisiana
National Council of Jewish Women Maryland
National Council of Jewish Women Michigan
National Council of Jewish Women Minnesota
National Council of Jewish Women Ohio
National Council of Jewish Women Pennsylvania
National Council of Jewish Women Tennessee
National Council of Jewish Women Texas
New Jersey Jewish Labor Committee
New York Jewish Agenda

Local:

Jewish Democratic Women's Salon Atlanta (GA)
Jewish Federation of Greater Rochester (NY)
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 Greater Dallas (TX) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Louisville (KY) Section
National Council of Jewish Women Miami (FL) 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 Pittsburgh (PA) Section

National Council of Jewish Women Sacramento (CA) Section
National Council of Jewish Women St. Louis (MO) Section