

January 28, 2022



**SUPPORT THE CONFIRMATION OF JUDGE J. MICHELLE CHILDS
TO THE U.S. COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CIRCUIT**

Dear Senator:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition of more than 230 national organizations committed to promoting and protecting the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States, we write to express our strong support for the confirmation of Judge J. Michelle Childs to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

Judge Childs' significant legal career and experience as a fair-minded judge will make her a great addition to the D.C. Circuit. Since 2010, Judge Childs has served as a judge on the U.S. District Court for the District of South Carolina. Prior to her appointment to the federal bench, she also served as a circuit court judge for the South Carolina Judicial Department. Prior to her judicial service, Judge Childs was a commissioner with the South Carolina Workers' Compensation Commission and the deputy director of the South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation. She also spent time in private practice as an associate and partner at Nexsen Pruet, LLC. Judge Childs is a graduate of the University of South Florida Honors College, University of South Carolina School of Law, University of South Carolina School of Business, and Duke University School of Law. She is well qualified for this seat, as demonstrated by her long record as a respected judge committed to equal justice.

Throughout her tenure as a federal judge, Judge Childs has demonstrated her even-handed approach to the law and commitment to the rights of all people. For example, she recognized the fundamental right of LGBT couples who were married out-of-state to have their marriages legally recognized in South Carolina,¹ and protected equitable access to the ballot box during the 2020 elections.² Since 2006, Judge Childs has served as an outstanding jurist, and she is eminently qualified for this role.

In addition to the important professional experience she would bring to the D.C. Circuit, Judge Childs would bring other vital representation to the federal bench. Judge Childs would only be the fourth Black woman to ever sit on this court. The historic exclusion of Black women from the judiciary is a well-documented problem.³ Until last year, no Black women had been confirmed to the federal appellate bench in nearly a decade, and no Black woman had been confirmed to this court in more than 15 years.⁴ A federal bench that represents and reflects the vast diversity of our nation is vital to robust and informed

¹ *Bradacs v. Haley*, No. 3:13-cv-02351-JMC (D.S.C. 2014).

² *Middleton v. Andino*, No. 3:20-cv-01730-JMC (D.S.C. 2020).

³ Sen, Maya, [*Diversity, Qualifications, and Ideology: How Female and Minority Judges Have Changed, or Not Changed, Over Time*](#), Wis. L. Rev. 367 (2017).

⁴ See [*Biographical Directory of Article III Federal Judges, 1789-present*](#), Federal Judicial Center.



decision-making⁵ and helps foster more public trust in our judiciary.⁶ The nomination of Judge Childs is an important step towards ensuring that our federal courts reflect and represent the diversity of our nation.

Judge Childs would be an excellent addition to the federal bench, and we strongly urge the Senate to confirm her to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact Lena Zwarenstein, Senior Director of the Fair Courts Program, at (202) 466-3311. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Wade Henderson
Interim President & CEO

Jesselyn McCurdy
Executive Vice President of Government Affairs

⁵ Berry, Kate, [Building a Diverse Bench: Selecting Federal Magistrate and Bankruptcy Judges](#), BRENNAN CENTER FOR JUSTICE AT NYU SCHOOL OF LAW AND AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION JUDICIAL DIVISION (2017).

⁶ Sen, *supra* note 4