

January 14, 2009

Senator Patrick Leahy
433 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-4502

Senator Arlen Specter
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-3802

Dear Senator Leahy and Senator Specter:

We, the undersigned religious, human rights, social and economic justice organizations, write to urge swift Senate action to confirm President-Elect Barack Obama's nominee Eric Holder for Attorney General of the United States.

Mr. Holder is the right choice to lead the Department of Justice. He is a highly qualified veteran of the Department of Justice who is well respected in the legal community. He has earned a reputation as a fair-minded, tough and aggressive foe of public corruption. And he has put public service above partisan politics and has been tapped by both Democrats and Republicans to serve. At a time when the Department of Justice faces a crisis of confidence and integrity, Mr. Holder has the commitment and experience needed to restore independence and adherence to the rule of law to the Department of Justice.

Mr. Holder's credentials are unparalleled. His integrity and talent have impressed Republicans and Democrats alike. He served as United States Attorney for the District of Columbia before being nominated to the D.C. Superior Court by President Reagan. Mr. Holder was unanimously confirmed by the Senate for the position of Deputy Attorney General. As the first African-American nominee to this position, Mr. Holder's nomination is historic.

Swift Senate confirmation of Mr. Holder will mark an end to the recent politicization and the scandals that rocked the department and undermined its mission of impartial justice and law enforcement. Prompt confirmation will allow Holder to quickly work to repair morale and to restore the Department's historic reputation for professionalism, fairness and impartial justice. As the leading law-enforcement official in the Obama administration, the Attorney General position must be filled swiftly.

As organizations working on a broad array of urgent unmet needs, we are concerned that a protracted confirmation process will divert the Senate's time and resources away from addressing the pressing issues facing our country.

Eric Holder's integrity, independence, reputation, experience, judgment, inclusiveness, and temperament make him a stellar nominee for Attorney General. We urge the Senate to quickly confirm this eminently qualified nominee.

Sincerely,

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights
A Network for Ideas & Action
Alliance for Justice
American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
Americans for Democratic Action, Inc.
Americans United for Change
Asian American Justice Center
Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN)
Campaign for America's Future
Center for Community Change
Center for Inquiry
Center for the Study of Hate & Extremism
Coalition of Labor Union Women
Coalition on Human Needs
Common Cause
Communications Workers of America (CWA)
DC Vote
Family Equality Council
Feminist Majority
GLSEN - the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network
Human Rights Campaign
International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace, & Agricultural Implement Workers
of America (UAW)
Japanese American Citizens League
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
League of United Latin American Citizens
Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund
NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund, Inc
National Abortion Federation
National Asian Pacific American Bar Association
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
National Association of Human Rights Workers (NAHRW)
National Black Justice Coalition
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of La Raza
National Council of Negro Women
National Education Association
National Employment Lawyers Association
National Fair Housing Alliance
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund
National Health Law Program

National Network to End Domestic Violence
National Organization for Women
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Urban League
National Women's Law Center
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) National
People for the American Way
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Progressive Future
Service Employees International Union
Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF)
The Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
U.S. Public Interest Research Group
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)
United Food and Commercial Workers International Union
USAction
Wider Opportunities for Women
Women Employed