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May 20, 2013

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
Chairman, Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Minority Member, Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy and Ranking Member Grassley,

For over 40 years, the Congressional Black Caucus has worked to positively influence the course of events pertinent to African Americans. We write to express our strong support of the nomination of Tony West to become the Associate Attorney General of the United States.

We agree that Mr. West's outstanding experience as a lawyer in private practice, as an assistant U.S. Attorney and special assistant attorney general for the state of California, and as a senior official in the Department of Justice since 2009 – including distinguished service working on issues that have deeply impacted the African-American Community – render him well qualified to perform the important duties of this position.

Under Acting Associate Attorney General West's leadership, the Department has achieved unprecedented success in upholding the civil and constitutional rights of all Americans, particularly in the areas of disability and voting rights, education, fair lending, human trafficking, constitutional policing, and hate-crimes. In the last two fiscal years alone, the Department has convicted the most defendants on hate-crime charges in more than a decade.



As Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Division, the largest litigating division of the U.S. Department of Justice, Mr. West effectively managed a robust civil enforcement docket and played a central role in protecting the American people from fraud and abuse. Mr. West led the Department's groundbreaking fair lending actions against Wells Fargo and Countrywide, which were the first cases ever brought by the Department in which a lender was held responsible for steering borrowers to risky subprime loans because of race or national origin. Working with U.S. Attorneys' offices across the country, the Civil Division has resolved a record number of False Claims Act cases under Mr. West's leadership.

Moreover, Mr. West has provided essential leadership to the Department's efforts to stem the flow of vulnerable students into the school-to-prison pipeline. As Acting Associate Attorney General, Mr. West responded adeptly to the growing use of suspensions, expulsions, and school arrests which have diverted students from the path to a diploma and long-term success.

Mr. West's exemplary legal experience, sound judgment, proven track record as a capable and efficient manager, and unwavering commitment to the civil and constitutional rights of all Americans make him an outstanding nominee. For the above reasons, we hope that the Senate will promptly confirm Mr. West to serve as the Associate Attorney General of the United States.

Sincerely,



Marcia L. Fudge
Chair, Congressional Black Caucus



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress