



January 6, 2014

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

The Honorable Charles Grassley, Ranking Member
Senate Judiciary Committee
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: *Nomination of Debo Adebile to be Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division*

Dear Senators Leahy and Grassley:

On behalf of the National Women's Law Center (the "Center"), an organization that has worked since 1972 to advance and protect women's legal rights, we write in strong support of the nomination of Debo Adebile to be Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division.

The Civil Rights Division enforces legal protections of critical importance to women, including Title VII, Title IX, the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) Act, the Fair Housing Act, the Voting Rights Act (VRA), and protections against hate crimes and crimes of human trafficking. The Division also enforces protections against discrimination on the grounds of disability and immigration status.

Recently, for example, the Civil Rights Division reinvigorated enforcement of federal laws against discrimination. Among other things, it litigated groundbreaking Title IX sexual harassment complaints against public schools, colleges, and universities; challenged discriminatory barriers for women working in nontraditional fields in state and local government, investigated gender discrimination by law enforcement agencies; brought numerous cases to enforce the Fair Housing Act's prohibition of gender discrimination; and protected women's ability to obtain reproductive health care without harassment or intimidation under the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act. The next head of the Civil Rights Division will have the opportunity to continue the important progress toward robust enforcement of these important antidiscrimination laws.

Mr. Adebile's stellar background makes him well prepared to continue the important work of the Civil Rights Division. Mr. Adebile earned his J.D. from New York University School of Law. For seven years following law school, Mr. Adebile was a litigation associate at the law firm of Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison.

While at the firm, Mr. Adegbile represented clients in the corporate, governmental, and nonprofit sectors in a variety of complex commercial, criminal and civil rights cases.

Following his time at Paul, Weiss, Mr. Adegbile litigated for more than a decade at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF). He served in various leadership positions at LDF, including Director of Litigation, and most recently as LDF's Acting President and Director-Counsel. In his time at LDF, he led the work on groundbreaking cases dealing with core civil rights protections, including cases that go to the heart of discriminatory barriers that limit opportunities for women and girls in education and at work. For example, in 2010, Mr. Adegbile supervised the LDF team that litigated *Lewis v. City of Chicago*, an employment discrimination action brought on behalf of a class of African-American firefighter applicants, in which the Center filed an amicus brief. Other critical cases of particular import to women on which Mr. Adegbile worked during his tenure at LDF included *Fisher v. University of Texas*, 570 U.S. ____ (2013), *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle Sch. Dist. No. 1*, 551 U.S. 701 (2007), *Ricci v. DeStefano*, 557 U.S. 557 (2009), and *Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. v. Dukes*, 564 U.S. ____ (2011). Mr. Adegbile also defended the constitutionality of the Voting Rights Act's (VRA) preclearance provisions before the Supreme Court in *Shelby County v. Holder*, 570 U.S. ____ (2013), and in *Northwest Austin Municipal Utility District No. 1 v. Holder*, 55 U.S. 193 (2009).

Mr. Adegbile is the consummate civil rights lawyer. He is highly regarded for his leadership, judgment, integrity, and knowledge of and commitment to civil rights. What is more, he would bring compelling life experience, ranging from homelessness in his youth to community service to arguing before the United States Supreme Court, to the leadership of this important office. Accordingly, the Center offers its strong support of Debo Adegbile to be Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice, and urges the Committee to approve his nomination quickly. If you have questions or if we can be of assistance, please contact us at (202) 588-5180.

Sincerely,



Nancy Duff Campbell
Co-President



Marcia D. Greenberger
Co-President

Cc.: Judiciary Committee