

Jonathan Greenblatt
CEO and National Director



February 19, 2021

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary
152 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

I write on behalf of ADL (the Anti-Defamation League) to share our strong support for the confirmation of Lisa Monaco, Vanita Gupta, and Kristen Clarke to key leadership positions in the US Department of Justice (DOJ). These three nominees have not only distinguished themselves as preeminent experts in their fields, but also possess significant experience within DOJ that will make them effective leaders of its efforts immediately upon their confirmation.

Throughout its history, ADL has endorsed nominees with whom we have considerable working relationships. Over the years, ADL has experienced firsthand the breadth of each of these nominees' expertise, judgment, and character. Each has exemplified a reverence for the U.S. Constitution and a determination to protect all Americans, including vulnerable communities. Critical work lies ahead for DOJ, and the agency's success depends upon the expeditious installation of professionals like these individuals, whose capacity for thoughtful consensus-building and the provision of strong and steady guidance is proven.

Even if the COVID-19 pandemic had not upended lives and livelihoods throughout the nation, DOJ would find itself at the center of some of the most important social and political developments of recent times as 2021 dawns.

As the oldest anti-hate organization in the world, ADL has monitored the unprecedented upswell of bigotry in America over the last four years. We have tracked the historic rise in the number of antisemitic incidents including the massacre at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh in 2018; the surge of ugly xenophobia directed against Latinos and immigrants including the attack on the Walmart in El Paso in 2019; and the recent wave of anti-AAPI assaults including the murder of an elderly Thai-American man in San Francisco earlier this month. DOJ has a pivotal role to play in creating a coordinated strategy to support local communities confronting the increase in hate crimes.

We also have been gripped by rising consciousness of racial injustice. The murders of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and too many other Black Americans at the hands of authorities charged with protecting us have accelerated a crisis of confidence in law enforcement institutions and the criminal justice system. DOJ alone has the experience, authority and capacity to conduct an effort as visible as this one must be to hold officials accountable for culture and practices that have led to abusive treatment of Black Americans and people of color more broadly.

Despite the record turnout in the 2020 presidential election, the widespread, baseless allegations of voter fraud have created an environment that could be conducive to voter suppression as well as discriminatory election and voting policies. Such practices disproportionately disenfranchise urban voters of color and diminish our entire democratic system, underscoring the urgency of DOJ taking a leadership role to investigate and challenge these harmful efforts and ensure that no laws or other actions grounded in racial bias are allowed to stand.

Finally, the attempted insurrection of January 6 provided a stark demonstration of the potentially devastating consequences of ignoring or minimizing the dangers posed by domestic extremism and invidious hate. DOJ's efforts will be instrumental in many aspects of the government response to this attack. This includes prioritizing domestic terror-related prosecutions and civil litigation, improving the accuracy of key data collections, like the FBI's Hate Crime Statistics report, and assisting local law enforcement to deal with these threats.

In this challenging context, we need sensitive and experienced leadership. We are pleased that the Biden Administration wisely has selected nominees who are leading experts in their field, individuals of the highest integrity who also are well-respected among DOJ's stakeholder-organizations.

Chosen to serve as Deputy Attorney General - the agency's second in command – Lisa Monaco possesses crucial experience and expertise in national security defense, cybersecurity, crisis management and prosecutions for violent crime and fraud. Ms. Monaco has served with distinction as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, as Principal Associate Deputy Attorney General, and as Assistant Attorney General for National Security. I met Ms. Monaco when she served as Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism under President Obama, and coordinated the Administration's management of and policies around incidents ranging from cyberattacks to natural disasters. In this capacity in particular, she was a trusted partner in ADL's anti-extremism work, exhibiting sound judgment, principled commitment, and the ability to make difficult decisions and stand behind them. I had the privilege of working alongside Ms. Monaco during her tenure in the

White House and know she will be a dedicated and tireless public servant if confirmed to the role.

Like Ms. Monaco, Vanita Gupta, the President's nominee to serve as Associate Attorney General, possesses experience and temperament that are particularly well-suited to DOJ's needs in this moment. As a groundbreaking civil rights advocate with an extraordinary track record of success, Ms. Gupta is an ideal candidate to ensure that the pursuit of racial justice and equity take precedence among DOJ's endeavors. She attained landmark results as a litigator and program director with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund (LDF) and the ACLU, including the exoneration of 38 individuals wrongly convicted of drug crimes based on the uncorroborated testimony of a Texas investigator who carried a Ku Klux Klan membership card. From 2014 to 2017, Ms. Gupta led DOJ's Civil Rights Division and its challenges to, among many other matters, discriminatory practices in lending, policing, and education; hate crimes and human trafficking; and the racially motivated adoption of strict voter ID requirements in Texas and North Carolina. This experience and her recent tenure as CEO at the Leadership Conference for Civil and Human Rights (LCCHR) have imbued her with extensive relationships with key actors, and with strong experience in forging consensus. I have worked alongside Ms. Gupta during her time as CEO of LCCHR, dealing with the wave of hate crimes across the country and developing policy strategies to ensure more equitable and fair treatment to all Americans.

Like Ms. Gupta, Kristen Clarke will bring much needed and well-rounded experience in the defense of civil rights to the position of Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. Ms. Clarke is a former Civil Rights Division litigator who has prosecuted hate crimes, human trafficking, police brutality, and voting rights and redistricting cases for the government, and civil rights cases on behalf of the NAACP LDF. She previously led both New York State's Civil Rights Bureau and the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. I have seen firsthand how she has demonstrated broad expertise in the strategic use of the law to achieve equal justice for all. Ms. Clarke understands in intimate detail the abilities and support that the litigators who will work under her will need, and her firsthand familiarity, coupled with her stellar reputation among leading civil rights advocacy organizations and leaders, will ensure that under her leadership the Civil Rights Division collaborates successfully with stakeholders and directs its efforts where they are most likely to bear fruit. As a partner in the anti-hate and voting rights work the Lawyers Committee has undertaken under Ms. Clarke's leadership, ADL is directly aware of her deep and unambiguous personal commitment to justice for all, including her steadfast support in the fight against antisemitism. I have watched her work in collaboration with advocates representing the full spectrum of racial, ethnic, and religious communities. I have no doubt about her integrity and professionalism. I feel privileged to call her an ally and friend.

In light of the urgent need for capable leaders like these women to guide DOJ's efforts to protect Americans from discrimination and to ensure a more just society, I urge you to act promptly and favorably on these nominations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jonathan Greenblatt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jonathan Greenblatt
CEO and National Director