

Crime Victim/Survivors, Advocates, and Justice Professionals Support for Ms. Vanita Gupta to Serve as Associate Attorney General

February 19, 2021

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary United States
Senate Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary United States
Senate Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Schumer, Durbin, McConnell and Grassley:

We are writing in strong support of Ms. Vanita Gupta as the Department of Justice's Associate Attorney General. Many of us have personal experience as victims/survivors of crime and all have long been advocates and providers of critical assistance services to crime victims/survivors. As such, we are well aware of the importance of the Associate Attorney General's (ASG) responsibilities that include direct supervision of the Department's most important components that support our efforts to provide quality, trauma-informed care to crime victims and survivors.

Ms. Gupta's background and personal experience make her extremely qualified for this important position. She has served as Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General for DOJ's Civil Rights Division, as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, and as Deputy Legal Director of the American Civil Liberties Union. As a civil rights attorney, she provided an important voice for bipartisan national criminal justice reform efforts and has earned the trust and confidence of a wide swath of professionals in the criminal justice field. Indeed, among law enforcement leaders and the rank and file, Ms. Gupta has been widely praised as a consensus-builder who is solutions-oriented, and someone who will seek to solve problems based in common purpose.

Ms. Gupta is also well aware, as are we, that victims' rights are civil rights. The Justice Department has a responsibility to not only secure those rights for victims in the federal criminal justice system through full, meaningful implementation of the Crime Victims' Rights Act, but to serve as a model for state, local and tribal justice systems. We are confident that Ms. Gupta will provide the leadership within DOJ to fully secure those rights in a strong, effective and well-balanced manner.

Among other responsibilities, the Associate Attorney General oversees the work of the Office of Justice Programs, and in particular, the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), as well as the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW). Both OVC and OVW depend upon the Crime Victims Fund to support multiple programs, including, among others, direct victim assistance services, supplemental funding for state crime victim compensation programs, response to incidents of mass violence and terrorism, and enforcement of crime victims'

rights. We know that Ms. Gupta is aware of the current dire condition of the Fund and, as Associate Attorney General, will be well positioned to help coordinate the Department's response to this serious dilemma.

We strongly urge your support for the confirmation of Ms. Vanita Gupta as Associate Attorney General.

Sincerely,

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