February 8, 2021

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

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

Re: Nomination of Kristen Clarke for Assistant Attorney General of the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

We write in strong support of the nomination of Kristen Clarke for the position of Assistant Attorney General of the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice. This letter is written on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Board of the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, and other members of our Board who are former Chairs of the Board.

The Lawyers’ Committee is an organization whose principal mission is to secure equal justice for all through the rule of law. The Lawyers’ Committee was created at the request of President John F. Kennedy in the summer of 1963 in the midst of a struggle to end racial segregation and institutionalized racial discrimination. President Kennedy presciently recognized that lawyers could use their training and influence to move the struggle for the protection of civil rights from the streets to the courts.

Though we have achieved much in the way of advancing civil rights since the 1960s, through both litigation and statutory changes, we recognize that much work remains to be done before all Americans obtain the benefits and privileges of full equality under the law. The work of Kristen Clarke, our President and Executive Director for the past five years, reminds us that in representing those who have suffered discrimination, we move our country a step closer to achieving our overarching goal of full equality for all Americans.

We know Kristen well and we know that she has fought throughout her career to achieve this goal. We know her as a daughter of immigrants, and a life-long leader in the struggle to achieve equal rights for all. We know her as a tireless advocate who became a civil rights lawyer because she saw the law as the best vehicle to address systemic racism and other barriers preventing all Americans from enjoying the opportunities available to the more privileged members of our society. We have observed her toil -- on a day to day basis under challenging circumstances -- over legal strategy,
directing and leading staff, and serving clients with zeal, compassion, and integrity. She is 
unapologetic in her quest for both equity and equality and is fearless in her willingness to identify 
those areas where our democracy is falling short.

Now, following a twenty-year career devoted exclusively to advancing the civil rights of all 
Americans, and after President Biden nominated Kristen to serve as the Assistant Attorney General 
of the Civil Rights Division at the United States Department of Justice, there are people who have 
leveled attacks, describing her as “hateful” and “racist.” These assertions are belied not only by 
Kristen’s distinguished career fighting against hate and injustice, but also by the daily example that 
she has shown to those of us who know her personally and have closely observed her 
professionalism, her compassion, and her integrity.

All of us are attorneys who have interacted with many attorneys and public officials throughout our 
professional careers. We are a diverse group of attorneys, representing all sectors of our society, and 
reflect the make-up of our country. All of us, without hesitation, know Kristen to be an attorney 
with the utmost integrity, with a deep and abiding commitment to fight against bigotry in all forms, 
including racism and antisemitism. Our support is based upon our close working relationship with 
Kristen in her professional capacity, and our personal relationship with her over the years. During 
those years Kristen has always been at the forefront of the fight against all forms of discrimination 
and hate-mongering, both explicit and implicit.

We therefore take great pride in submitting this letter on behalf of Kristen Clarke’s nomination. And 
we can think of no better words to describe Kristen than the ones the President used to describe her 
and her fellow nominees: “eminently qualified, embodying character and judgment that is beyond 
reproach, and having devoted their careers to serving the American people with honor and 
integrity.”

Yours truly,

Hon. Shira A. Scheindlin
United States District Judge (Ret.)

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