



**National
Urban League**

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**Statement of Marc H. Morial
President and CEO
National Urban League**

Before the

Senate Judiciary Committee

In Support of the Nomination of U.S. Attorney Loretta Lynch as U.S. Attorney General

January 28 -29, 2015

Chairman Grassley, Ranking Member Leahy, members of the Committee, the National Urban League applauds President Obama's nomination of U.S. Attorney Loretta Lynch to serve as America's next U.S. Attorney General and strongly urges that she be confirmed by the Senate without delay.

By naming his choice to succeed Attorney General Eric Holder shortly after Mr. Holder announced his decision to retire, the President affirmed his commitment to seamlessly uphold the civil rights protections and criminal justice reforms that have been so fiercely advocated by Mr. Holder. U.S. Attorney Loretta Lynch's confirmation would advance this nation's ongoing pursuit of becoming a more perfect union where she would become the nation's first African American woman to serve as U.S. Attorney General. She has distinguished herself as a tough, fair, independent lawyer dedicated to equal justice under the law.

Loretta Lynch has served more than 15 years as a prosecutor in the office that covers eight million people in Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island and Long Island, New York. The Senate unanimously confirmed her to lead the U.S. Attorney's office on two separate occasions – once under President Clinton and more recently under President Obama. She has an outstanding record of successful prosecutions, including the terrorists who plotted to bomb the Federal Reserve Bank and the New York subway system, some of New York's most violent and notorious mobsters and gang members, and corrupt public officials from both parties. She has also won a number of Wall Street financial fraud cases. In 1999, she famously prosecuted one of the most egregious cases of police brutality in New York City history, the beating and sexual assault of Haitian immigrant, Abner Louima.

In nominating Loretta Lynch, President Obama said, "It is pretty hard to be more qualified for this job than Loretta. Throughout her 30-year career, she has distinguished herself as tough, as fair, an independent lawyer who has twice headed the most prominent offices in the country. She has spent years in the trenches as a prosecutor, aggressively fighting terrorism, financial fraud, cyber-crime, all while vigorously defending civil rights."

A native of Greensboro, North Carolina, the daughter of a Baptist minister and the granddaughter of a pastor/sharecropper, Loretta Lynch's dedication to protecting civil rights and ensuring equal justice is part of her DNA. Her background and experiences also inform her

commitment to common sense criminal justice reforms designed to make our system smarter and fairer. She remembers as a child riding on her father's shoulders to student anti-segregation boycott meetings at his church. She also recalls her sharecropper grandfather lamenting, "In rural North Carolina in the 1930s, if you were poor and Black and got in trouble with the law, you had very little recourse." Her personal history has taught her that justice is larger than any one case or conviction – that a fair and equal justice system is essential to who we are as a nation.

As a lawyer and U.S. attorney, Loretta Lynch's career has been undergirded by an unshakeable belief that, as she states, "Justice is only served when people feel protected by their government rather than targeted." In light of the many challenges we face today with respect to how our criminal justice system impacts the lives of African American men, women and our young people, we especially applaud Loretta Lynch's commitment to improving the criminal justice system and her recognition that there is still much more work that must be done.

Those are the values we look for most in the "People's Lawyer." The National Urban League therefore urges the Senate to confirm Loretta Lynch as the next United States Attorney General without delay and assure continuity in enforcing our federal laws, protecting our civil rights and keeping Americans safe.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our views.

About the National Urban League

The National Urban League (www.nul.org) is a historic civil rights and urban advocacy organization dedicated to economic empowerment in historically underserved urban communities. Founded in 1910 and headquartered in New York City, the National Urban League has improved the lives of tens of millions of people nationwide through direct service programs that are implemented locally by its 95 Urban League affiliates in 36 states and the District of Columbia. The organization also conducts public policy research and advocacy activities from its D.C.-based, Washington Bureau. The National Urban League, a BBB-accredited organization, has a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, placing it in the top 10 percent of all U.S. charities for adhering to good governance, fiscal responsibility and other best practices.