

February 26, 2021

Senate Judiciary Committee  
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Nomination of Vanita Gupta to be Associate Attorney General (PN79-4-117)

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

The National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT) is a 15-year old coalition of over 300 national, regional and local faith organizations. In our work, we have prioritized criminal justice reform, especially ending the use of long-term solitary confinement in our nation's prisons and jails.

President Biden's nominee for the position of associate attorney general, **Vanita Gupta**, has been a friend and colleague of the faith community in this work throughout her career. There were times when we didn't have consensus, most recently in the debate over legislation on criminal justice reform passed by Congress and signed by President Trump – the First Step Act. Vanita and the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights led many aspects of the national conversation. In that lead role, she showed respect for the diversity of the faith community, even setting aside her own biases, to give room for faith-based organizations to support or oppose various provisions of the bill based on their own traditions and membership.

It is a rare commodity in Washington, D.C. to have someone who listens with an active ear and with a mind toward building consensus whenever and wherever you can. She knows the work of our religious congregations – Muslim, Jewish, Christian, Sikh and many others – because she has been in serious dialogue with us for years on a wide range of policy issues.

We need people in the DOJ who know, and understand, how to collaborate with the faith community and how to navigate the dynamics of interfaith advocacy and community service. I can't think of anyone who fits this bill more than Vanita Gupta. She will be a fair and respectful partner to those of us working to engage religious congregations and organizations in the work and priorities of our nation.

Sincerely,



Rev. Ron Stief  
Executive Director