



PRESIDENT
NAN ARON

CHAIR
PAULETTE MEYER

February 21, 2021

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Chairman
Senate Judiciary Committee

Dear Chairman Durbin:

On behalf of the Alliance for Justice (AFJ), a national association representing over 120 public interest and civil rights organizations, I write to strongly support the confirmation of Merrick Garland to serve as Attorney General of the United States.

Merrick Garland's nomination is not occurring in a vacuum; it is colored by the Trump Administration's repeated degradation of the rule of law and politicization of the Justice Department (DOJ).

That abuse of the Justice Department includes the erosion of critical constitutional rights and legal protections. Attorneys General Sessions and Barr were not subtle in their efforts to abandon protecting Americans across the country in favor of a dangerous agenda. The Trump Justice Department refused to defend acts of Congress, including, most notably, the Affordable Care Act, risking access to quality health care for millions. Sessions and Barr dramatically scaled back civil rights enforcement, including voting rights. They derailed efforts to ensure constitutional policing, led an assault on Americans fighting for racial justice following the murder of George Floyd, and undermined fairness in the criminal justice system. They aggressively fought to curtail LGBTQ rights and laws that protect persons with disabilities. They exploited DOJ's position as the superintendent of our nation's immigration courts to advance an anti-immigrant agenda. They aided an assault on clean air and water and attacked protections for consumers.

For all those who care deeply about an independent Justice Department truly committed to equal justice under law, this is a pivotal moment in our history. And, at this key juncture, AFJ believes that Merrick Garland is exceptionally suited to lead DOJ and restore trust and dignity to the Department.

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As you know, in 2016, President Obama nominated Judge Garland to fill the seat left vacant after Justice Antonin Scalia's death. At that time, AFJ compiled [an in-depth](#) report on Garland's background. While the Republican-led Senate staged a historic and egregious obstruction of the nomination, we believe our conclusions then are just as relevant now: Throughout his career, "Judge Garland has demonstrated extraordinary intellect, fairness, humility, and an unwavering commitment to the rule of law."

AFJ has no doubt that Judge Garland will restore independence and integrity to the Department. He will ensure faithful application of some of our nation's most important rights and statutes and ensure that our nation's laws are administered fairly and fully. We are likewise confident he will be steadfast in his dedication to equal justice for all persons, including the most vulnerable in our society.

Throughout his career, Judge Garland has served our justice system with distinction. He is ready on his first day as attorney general to begin to reverse the travesties of the Trump administration. Along with Lisa Monaco, Vanita Gupta, and Kristen Clarke — and the scores of outstanding career lawyers, agents, and employees at the Justice Department — we are confident there will be a rejuvenated Department dedicated to the cause of justice and rule of law. The Senate should expeditiously confirm Garland as attorney general and these other prominent appointees.

Sincerely,



Nan Aron
President