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June 23, 2014

Confirm Pamela Harris to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee Member:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, we write to express our strong support for the confirmation of Pamela Ann Harris to serve on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. At every stage in her career, Pamela Harris has distinguished herself through her outstanding intellectual credentials, her independence of thought, and her strong respect for the rule of law, establishing herself beyond question as qualified and ready to serve on the court. In addition, she has demonstrated an unwavering integrity and an outstanding commitment to public service.

The Leadership Conference believes Pamela Harris will be an impartial, thoughtful, and highly-respected addition to the court. She graduated *summa cum laude* from Yale College in 1985 and received her J.D. from Yale Law School in 1990. After law school, she was a law clerk for Judge Harry T. Edwards of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. She spent one year as an associate at Shea & Gardner (now Goodwin Proctor LLP) before clerking for Justice John Paul Stevens of the Supreme Court. From 2010-2012, she served at the Department of Justice as Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Office of Legal Policy.

Ms. Harris has devoted her career largely to academia and public service, excelling in both. She has demonstrated a commitment to improving the fair administration of justice and educating new lawyers. In 1996, she joined the faculty of the University Of Pennsylvania Law School, where she taught courses in criminal procedure and received the Harvey Levin Memorial Teaching Award in 1998. At O'Melveny & Myers LLP, where she was counsel, Harris specialized in appellate and Supreme Court litigation and was named partner in 2005. During her ten years in private practice, Harris has become a renowned Supreme Court and appellate advocate, appearing in approximately 100 federal appellate cases. In addition, Harris established a cooperative program between O'Melveny and the Maryland Office of Public Defender, through which the firm provides pro bono representation to indigent criminal defendants appealing their convictions in state court.

Notably, Harris has used her uniquely broad experience as an appellate litigator to prepare the next generation of legal advocates and improve the judiciary. She was a visiting professor at Georgetown University Law Center and executive director of the law school's Supreme Court Institute. As executive director, she managed and participated in a moot court program that prepares advocates for oral argument before the Supreme Court. During her tenure, she worked with lawyers representing a multitude of interests. For example she assisted both the offices of state attorneys general and lawyers for criminal defendants; helped to improve arguments by lawyers bringing civil rights actions and those defending



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against civil rights actions; and worked with attorneys representing both plaintiffs and defendant corporations. She has also served as lecturer and co-director of the Supreme Court and Appellate Practice Clinic at Harvard Law School.

The Leadership Conference believes that Pamela Harris is an extraordinarily gifted nominee, with the ability to make objective decisions on the multifaceted and prominent cases that will surely come before the court. Her impeccable credentials have garnered her the support of a diverse group of attorneys in the legal community and people across the political spectrum. Harris' rich diversity of experience makes her an excellent choice for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, and we urge the Senate Judiciary Committee to promptly move forward with her confirmation.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Nancy Zirkin, Executive Vice President, at Zirkin@civilrights.org or (202) 466-2880, or Sakira Cook, Counsel, at cook@civilrights.org or (202) 263-2894.

Sincerely,

Wade Henderson
President & CEO

Nancy Zirkin
Executive Vice President