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September 27, 2016

The Honorable Charles Grassley
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Grassley:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition of more than 200 national advocacy organizations, we write to urge the Senate Judiciary Committee to hold a hearing and vote on the pending nomination of Judge Richard Boulware II to the U.S. Sentencing Commission. As of today, Judge Boulware's nomination has been languishing before the Senate Judiciary Committee for more than a year.

Judge Boulware, a graduate of Columbia Law School, is extremely well qualified and fit to serve on the U.S. Sentencing Commission. A former public defender, Judge Boulware will bring a much needed and valuable perspective to the work of the Commission. Judge Boulware began his legal career as a law clerk for the U.S. District Court of the Southern District of New York. Thereafter he became a trial attorney in New York City's Federal Public Defender's Office and also worked for Federal Public Defender's Office in Las Vegas as a trial attorney.ⁱ From 2008 to 2013, Judge Boulware served as an officer in the Las Vegas branch of the NAACP where he represented the group on 14 occasions before the legislature, on such issues as voting rights, cameras in police cars, and solitary confinement.ⁱⁱ His cumulative experience will be invaluable in recommending sentencing guidelines for federal courts.

In addition to his extensive professional experience, Judge Boulware is the recipient of a 2011 President's Award from the National Bar Association as well as the Medal of Justice Award from the State Bar of Nevada and the Dedicated Service award from Nevada Attorneys for Criminal Justice. He has served on a variety of nonprofit boards and community committees focused on issues plaguing disadvantaged communities.

In January 2014, President Barack Obama nominated Judge Boulware to the U.S. District Court for the District of Nevada. Boulware was confirmed by the Senate in June 2014, becoming the first African American man to serve on the U.S. District Court for the District of Nevada.

On September 9, 2015, President Obama nominated Judge Boulware to the U.S. Sentencing Commission. Today, Judge Boulware's nomination remains pending, while Danny Reeves, Majority Leader McConnell's 2016 recommendation to the commission, has already received a confirmation hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee. Judge Charles Breyer, who has served as Vice Chair of the commission since 2013, was nominated for a reappointment and did not require another hearing. Both Reeves and Judge Breyer were voted out of the committee by voice vote in September.



The U.S. Sentencing Commission is integral to addressing the widespread disparity that exists in federal sentencing. The Senate Judiciary Committee has a duty to confirm a nominee who is experienced and who has dedicated his career to working against injustice. Judge Richard Boulware's track record more than meets those requirements and we hope to see an expeditious confirmation of Judge Boulware to the U.S. Sentencing Commission. If you have any questions, please contact Sakira Cook at 202-263-2894 or at cook@civilrights.org.

Sincerely,

Wade Henderson
President & CEO

Nancy Zirkin
Executive Vice President

ⁱ U.S. District Court - District of Nevada - Home. (n.d.). Retrieved September 21, 2016, from <http://www.nvd.uscourts.gov/Bio/rfBoulware.aspx>

ⁱⁱ Bureau, S. T. (2014, April 03). Nevada federal judge nominee advances over surprise opposition. Retrieved September 21, 2016, from <http://www.reviewjournal.com/news/nevada-federal-judge-nominee-advances-over-surprise-opposition>