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November 17, 2022

Priority Executive Branch Confirmations for the Remainder of the 117th Congress

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Schumer:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition of more than 230 national advocacy organizations, we write to voice our strong support for the confirmation of several priority executive branch nominations in the remainder of the 117th Congress. We greatly appreciate your leadership throughout the past two years in advancing the civil and human rights agenda, through both legislation and the confirmations process. As the Senate now returns from the midterm elections, we urge you to do all you can to ensure the long-overdue confirmations of the nominees listed below.

While we have been deeply frustrated by the routine use of the filibuster to block many key civil and human rights legislative priorities, the Senate's record in confirming judicial and executive branch nominees has been a profound success. The historic confirmation of Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson to the U.S. Supreme Court — the first Black woman and first public defender to be confirmed to our highest court — is only the most prominent example. To date, the Senate has confirmed 85 lifetime judges to the federal courts, including 64 women and 56 people of color. The Senate also made many historic confirmations to the executive branch, including Vanita Gupta (our former president and CEO) and Kristen Clarke to key positions in the Department of Justice, Dr. Lisa D. Cook to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve, and Robert L. Santos to be director of the Census Bureau. Many of these and other highly qualified nominees were confirmed despite partisan stalling tactics and baseless personal attacks.

We are grateful to the Biden administration for nominating, and to the Senate for working tirelessly to defend and confirm, so many individuals who have strong records on promoting civil and human rights and who add to the diversity at the highest levels of our federal government. In the remaining weeks of the 117th Congress, we urge you to keep up the good work.

We have [written separately](#) urging the Senate to confirm several dozen judicial nominees who are awaiting Senate floor action, committee votes, or confirmation hearings. We now write to bring several executive branch nominees to your attention and to ask you to take all



steps necessary to ensure their confirmation before the end of the 117th Congress. In particular, we support the confirmations of:

- **Kalpana Kotagal as commissioner of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).** Ms. Kotagal is an exceptionally qualified civil rights lawyer who has dedicated the bulk of her career to helping everyday working people enforce their rights under federal employment and anti-discrimination laws. Her knowledge of the law and her experience addressing systemic discrimination make her an outstanding choice to help lead the EEOC in its work to prevent and remedy unlawful employment discrimination and to promote equal opportunity in the workplace. Ms. Kotagal's confirmation will alleviate the gridlock that has recently prevented the EEOC from carrying out a robust anti-discrimination agenda.
- **Gigi Sohn as commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).** Ms. Sohn has dedicated herself to the public interest throughout her career, including her service on the Presidential Advisory Commission on the Public Interest Obligations of Digital Television Broadcasters, her advocacy for policies that promote diversity and competition in the non-profit sector, and her time at the FCC as a senior counselor to the chairman. If confirmed, she would be the FCC's first openly LGBTQ commissioner.
- **David Uejio as assistant secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO)** in the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Mr. Uejio has extensive expertise in fair lending and organizational management and a distinguished track record of public service, most recently as Acting Associate Director for Supervision, Enforcement, and Fair Lending at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. As the head of FHEO, he would play a key role in civil rights enforcement, setting policy throughout the agency and protecting communities across the country from housing discrimination.

As we stated in a [letter earlier this week](#) outlining our legislative priorities for the remainder of the 117th Congress, the above list of pending nominees is far from exhaustive. We recognize that you have a great deal of business before you as the Senate attempts to conclude the 117th Congress. The nominations of Ms. Kotagal, Ms. Sohn, and Mr. Uejio, however, are of particular importance to the civil and human rights movement and to the communities we represent. We strongly urge you to utilize all resources at your disposal and to schedule the floor time necessary for their confirmation in the coming weeks.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please contact Rob Randhava, senior counsel, at randhava@civilrights.org.

Sincerely,

Maya Wiley
President & CEO

Jesselyn McCurdy
Executive Vice President of Government Affairs