



The Council of Presidents

National Pan-Hellenic Council, Inc.

Statement on Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson's nomination to the United States Supreme Court

In light of President Biden's recent nomination of Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to become the 116th Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court and the first African American woman to hold that position, the Council of Presidents, comprised of the International Presidents of the 9 fraternities and sororities that constitute the National Panhellenic Council (NPHC), also known as the Divine Nine, express our unwavering support for this historic nomination and request a swift and fair confirmation process before the United States Senate.

The United States Supreme Court was established by the United States Constitution but began to take shape with the passage of the Judiciary Act of 1789 and the first assembly in 1790. Since that time, the Court has been centerstage for some of the most consequential decisions that impact all aspects of American life. The Court has evolved over the years, in part as a reflection of cultural norms. In 1857, the Supreme Court in *Dred Scott v. Sanford* stated that African Americans "had no rights which the white man was bound to respect." In 1896, the Supreme Court in *Plessy v. Ferguson* upheld the constitutionality of racial segregation under the "separate but equal" doctrine. In 1954, the Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* ruled that racial segregation in public schools violated the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which prohibits the states from denying equal protection of the laws to any person within their jurisdictions.

These highlighted decisions underscore the importance of the Supreme Court to either reinforce injustice or to ensure that all Americans (no matter their color, sex, or other status) enjoy all the freedoms that the United States Constitution guarantees to all citizens. We believe that a United States Supreme Court that reflects the demographics of America is in the best position to infuse perspectives to safeguard the progress achieved to date.

Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson's nomination to the United States Supreme Court reflects progress in that we recognize that there are African American women who have all the requisite knowledge and expertise to sit on the highest court in the land. Judge Jackson's qualifications to serve as a Justice of the Supreme Court is undeniable. She graduated *magna cum laude* from Harvard College, then attended Harvard Law School, where she graduated *cum laude* and was an editor of the *Harvard Law Review*. After law school, Judge Jackson served in Justice Breyer's chambers as a law clerk. Professionally, Judge Jackson has broad experience across

the legal profession – as a federal appellate judge, a federal district court judge, a member of the U.S. Sentencing Commission, an attorney in private practice, and as a federal public defender. She also enjoys endorsements of numerous groups.

The Council of Presidents will jointly encourage our respective organizations to partner with other groups that also believe that the United States Supreme Court should represent the talent that exists in all corners of America. The Supreme Court has been in existence for over 230 years, so the nomination and confirmation of Judge Jackson is long overdue.

The Council of Presidents jointly remain steadfast in our conviction that we are on the right side of history and will mobilize advocacy directed towards the United States Senators to confirm Judge Jackson to the United States Supreme Court without delay.

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