



May 24, 2016

The Honorable Charles Grassley
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Grassley:

On behalf of the 72 undersigned organizations that serve the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, we write to urge you and the Senate Judiciary Committee to consider President Obama's nomination of Chief Judge Merrick Garland to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Senate Judiciary Committee began holding hearings for Supreme Court nominees in 1916, and every pending Supreme Court nominee has received a hearing—except for nine nominees who were confirmed within eleven days.

Since 1975, the time between formal nomination and a Judiciary Committee hearing for Supreme Court nominees is an average of 42 days. Chief Judge Merrick Garland was nominated on March 16, and as of this Thursday, he will have waited longer than any of the past 14 nominees for a hearing. In fact, the full Senate confirmed half of those 14 nominees—including Chief Justice John Roberts and Justice Sonia Sotomayor—in the time that your Judiciary Committee has not acted.

We agree with your statement in 2006, regarding the nomination of Justice Samuel Alito, in which you said, “The Constitution provides that the President nominates a Supreme Court Justice, and the Senate provides its advice and consent, with an up or down vote.”

We also agree when you further explained that “A Supreme Court nomination is not a forum to fight any election. It is the time to perform one of our most important constitutional duties and decide whether a nominee is qualified to serve on the nation's highest court.”

Chief Judge Merrick Garland—with more federal judicial experience than any Supreme Court nominee in history—is unquestionably qualified to serve on the nation's highest court. Now is the

time for you and the Senate Judiciary Committee to perform one of your most important constitutional duties.

The Constitution does not provide an exception to this duty in presidential election years. Indeed, since 1900, the Senate has confirmed six Justices in presidential election years, most recently in 1988, when a Democratic-controlled Senate unanimously confirmed President Reagan's nomination of Justice Anthony Kennedy.

With regard to the myriad Asian American and Pacific Islander communities across this nation, the Supreme Court continues to consider and decide critical issues that directly impact our communities -- from immigration to women's health. We understand the importance of a fully-functioning Supreme Court and the need for nine Justices to establish uniform, nationwide rules. The guarantee of justice owed to the people of this country requires nothing less, and a vacancy on our nation's highest court for nearly two full court terms is unacceptable.

We strongly urge you to fulfill your constitutional duty and to follow history and precedent. The Judiciary Committee must provide Chief Judge Garland a fair hearing and vote without any further delay.

Sincerely,

Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA)

Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Atlanta
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Chicago
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Los Angeles
APIAVote – Michigan
Arizona APIA Vote Table
Arkansas Coalition of Marshallese (ACOM)
Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS)
Asia Pacific Cultural Center
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum (APIAHF)
Asian American Bar Association of Greater Chicago
Asian American Bar Association of the Greater Bay Area
Asian American Organizing Project
Asian Americans United
Asian Chamber of Commerce of Arizona
Asian Corporate & Entrepreneur Leaders
Asian Health Coalition
Asian Law Alliance
Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Los Angeles County (APABA)
Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Virginia

Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS)
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO (APALA)
Asian Pacific American Women Lawyers Alliance (APAWLA)
Asian Pacific Health Care Venture (APHCV)
Asian Pacific Islander Coalition of Pierce County
Asian Services in Action
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)
Center for Southeast Asians
Chinese Community Center (Houston, TX)
Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF)
Council on American-Islamic Relations - Chicago (CAIR-Chicago)
Dallas Asian American Bar Association
Ethnic Minorities of Burma Advocacy and Resource Center (EMBARC)
Japanese American Bar Association (JABA)
Japanese American Citizens League, San Jose Chapter
Kheir Center
Korean American Bar Association of Southern California (KABA)
Korean American Community Services
Korean American Family Services (KFAM)
Korean American Resource & Cultural Center
Korean Resource Center
Lao Assistance Center of MN
Lao Association of Connecticut, Inc.
Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics
MinKwon Center for Community Action
MQVN Community Development Corporation, Inc. (MQVN CDC)
NAPABA – Hawaii
National Alliance to Nurture the Aged and the Youth (NANAY, Inc. and NANAY CEDC)
National Asian American Pacific Islander Mental Health Association (NAAPIMHA)
National Asian Pacific American Families Against Substance Abuse (NAPAFASA)
National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development (National CAPACD)
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC)
National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA)
National Tongan American Society (NTAS)
OCA – Asian Pacific American Advocates
OCA Greater Tucson Chapter
Ohio Asian American Health Coalition (OAAHC)
Orange County Asian American Bar Association (OCAABA)
Orange County Korean American Bar Association (OCKABA)
Pacific American Foundation (PAF)
Pacific Asian Counseling Services (PACSLA)
Papa Ola Lokahi
Philippine American Bar Association (Los Angeles)

Sikh American Legal Defense & Education Fund (SALDEF)
South Asian Bar Association of Chicago
South Asian Bar Association of Southern California
South Asian Network (SAN)
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
Taulama for Tongans
Tennessee Immigrant and Minority Business Group
The Center for APA Women
TOFA of Sacramento, Inc.