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Contact: Shin Inouye, [202.869.0398](tel:202.869.0398), Inouye@civilrights.org

60 Civil Rights Groups Urge DeVos to Select an Assistant Secretary who will Protect Civil Rights of All Students

WASHINGTON – Today, 60 civil rights groups sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos emphasizing the importance of the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and the qualities of the individual who should lead the office.

As the administration prepares to select a leader to serve in one of the most significant roles in the education of our nation’s children, the signers urge Secretary DeVos to work with President Trump to select an individual to lead OCR who has demonstrated experience with and a commitment to enforcing federal civil rights law and promoting equal educational opportunity regardless of race, ethnicity, language, religion, immigration status, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation.

“Every child has the right to attend a public school that is warm, welcoming, rigorous and that prepares them for success in life. Our bedrock civil rights laws, made meaningful through enforcement and oversight, stand guard to protect that right and ensure equal educational opportunity,” the letter states.

Every day, too many children experience discrimination resulting in vastly different educational opportunities. Our nation’s children deserve to be represented by a leader who will stand up for them, enforce core nondiscrimination statutes in schools, and ensure equal protection.

“It is imperative that the administration demonstrate its commitment to civil rights through this appointment. The assistant secretary for OCR must have a track record of experience with civil rights law and be fully committed to remedying individual and systemic discrimination within our nation’s school systems. Secretary DeVos must preserve OCR’s critical role in ensuring equal access to education and enforcing our nation’s laws protecting students’ civil rights,” said Wade Henderson, president and CEO of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights.

The full letter is linked [here](#).