For Immediate Release
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NAACP Legal Defense Fund Opposes Confirmation of Judicial Nominee Mark Norris

Today, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) sent a letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee expressing our strong opposition to the confirmation of Mark Norris to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Tennessee. LDF is calling on Committee members to reject Mr. Norris' nomination based on his appalling record, one that stands out even among President Trump’s long line of anti-civil rights nominees.

As a state legislator and Majority Leader of the Tennessee Senate, Norris demonstrated a laser-focused determination to destroy civil rights protections and laws. As highlighted in LDF’s letter, Norris not only supported Tennessee’s strict voter ID law, but he also proposed a provision to require proof of citizenship that failed in the legislature. He championed legislation that deepened school segregation in Memphis; he opposed efforts to protect LGBTQ workers from discrimination; and, he fought marriage equality even after the Supreme Court declared it a constitutional right. He has equated refugees to terrorists, and fueled Islamophobia with fear-mongering about “Sharia law” in Tennessee.

Ultimately, Norris’s long anti-civil rights record reveals bias and a lack of judicial temperament that render him unfit to serve as a federal judge. As LDF’s letter notes: “No litigant who brought a civil rights claim before Norris would believe that he could provide an impartial hearing and fairly adjudicate claims involving the nation’s civil rights laws. Confirming Norris would thus undermine the rule of law and erode the very legitimacy of the judiciary.”

Read LDF’s letter opposing Mark Norris here.

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Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation’s first civil and human rights law organization and has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF’s Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF.