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Civil Rights Leaders Discuss #WhatsAtStake for Voting Rights in SCOTUS Fight

WASHINGTON – The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights hosted a telephone press briefing with other civil rights leaders today to outline and emphasize Supreme Court Justice nominee Brett Kavanaugh’s threatening record to voting rights. The speakers underscored the dangerous implications of more restrictive voting rights for marginalized communities.

A recording of the press briefing can be found [here](#).

“Voting rights protect every other right we enjoy, and it is essential that the next Supreme Court justice has a clear commitment to protecting access to the ballot box and that the voices of American voters are heard and respected in the confirmation process,” said [Janai Nelson](#), **associate director-counsel at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.** “LDF is conducting a comprehensive review of Judge Kavanaugh’s extensive record, and we’re deeply concerned by what we’ve seen thus far. Many of his decisions suggest that his confirmation to the Court would deal a deathblow to our progress in advancing civil rights. For these reasons and more, the Senate Judiciary Committee should press pause on the confirmation process and protect the interests of the American people at this precarious moment in our country. Preserving the integrity of the Supreme Court must be our highest priority.”

“By selecting Brett Kavanaugh to serve a lifetime appointment on the Supreme Court, President Trump carried out his threat to nominate justices who would overturn *Roe v. Wade* and undermine the Affordable Care Act,” said **Vanita Gupta, president and CEO of The Leadership Conference**. “What’s more, if confirmed, Kavanaugh would undermine voting rights enforcement in our nation. Efforts to suppress voting rights are efforts to suppress the power of we, the people. If Kavanaugh is confirmed, the days when we could look to the Supreme Court with the hope of safeguarding our fundamental right to vote would be over.”

“Voting is a foundational right, central to the protection of all other rights guaranteed by our Constitution and by our national values; in the years to come, the Supreme Court will face challenges to voting rights as those in power seek to preserve their advantage,” said **Thomas**

Saenz, president and general counsel of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF). “It is essential that any nominated justice demonstrate a commitment and understanding that the right to vote of all eligible persons, including those from politically emerging communities, must not be subordinated to the political machinations of those long in control of local or state government.”

“For so many Asian American Pacific Islander immigrant and refugee families who came to America with the belief that American democracy represented a chance at a better life, free of oppression, the ability to vote represents more than just civic participation--it also represents freedom,” said **Gregg Orton, national director of the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA).** “Brett Kavanaugh's track record on voting rights cannot be ignored and he should be rejected by the Senate.”

“Seating a Supreme Court nominee with an obvious disdain for fundamental liberties will change American life as we know it,” said **Suzanne Bergeron, senior director of civil rights and workforce policy at the National Urban League.** “The National Urban League is urging the Senate to reject his nomination, as we firmly believe that, if Judge Kavanaugh is confirmed, it could take generations to undo the damage to our voting protections, our civil rights, as well as access to healthcare, environmental protections, consumer rights, women’s reproductive rights, LGBTQ rights, and immigration rights... just to name a few. We will continue to push the Senate to use the judgement bestowed upon it by the Constitution to delay this vote until the cloud of the Mueller investigation dissipates.”

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About the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF)

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 multidisciplinary 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.

About the Leadership Conference

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights is a coalition charged by its diverse membership of more than 200 national organizations to promote and protect the rights of all persons in the United States. The Leadership Conference works toward an America as good as its ideals. For more information on The Leadership Conference and its 200-plus member organizations, visit www.civilrights.org.

About the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)

Founded in 1968, MALDEF is the nation’s leading Latino legal civil rights organization. Often described as the “law firm of the Latino community,” MALDEF promotes social change through advocacy, communications, community education, and litigation in the areas of education,

employment, immigrant rights, and political access. For more information on MALDEF, please visit: www.maldef.org.

About the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans

Based in Washington, D.C., the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans is a coalition of 34 national Asian Pacific American organizations that serves to represent the interests of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities and to provide a national voice for our communities' concerns. Our communities are the fastest growing racial/ethnic group in the United States, currently making up approximately six percent of the population.

About the National Urban League

The National Urban League is a historic civil rights organization dedicated to economic empowerment in order to elevate the standard of living in historically underserved urban communities. The National Urban League spearheads the efforts of its 90 local affiliates through the development of programs, public policy research and advocacy, providing direct services that impact and improve the lives of more than 2 million people annually nationwide. Visit www.nul.org and follow us on Twitter and Instagram: @NatUrbanLeague.