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LDF Media
212-965-2200 / media@naacpldf.org

LDF Issues Statement on Senate Judiciary Committee Vote on Supreme Court Nomination of Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson

Today, the Senate Judiciary Committee voted on the historic nomination of Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson for Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Despite her exemplary record, the Committee vote fell along party lines resulting in a tie. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer must now use a set of Senate procedures to move Judge Jackson's nomination to the floor of the chamber for a full vote.

In response to today's vote, Janai S. Nelson, President and Director-Counsel of the [NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.](#) (LDF), issued the following statement:

“By any measure, Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson is extremely qualified to serve as the nation's next Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court. Her [extensive experience](#), temperament, and perspective on some of the country's most marginalized communities will bring a much-needed voice to the Court. Despite these qualities and after spending much of Judge Jackson's confirmation hearings asking offensive questions and making baseless statements in an obvious attempt to malign Judge Jackson with racist tropes about her record and character, Republican senators have again chosen party politics over the best interests of our nation.

“These tactics are not unprecedented. There were similarly racist broadsides in the confirmation hearings for other Black jurists who were also immensely well-qualified and the first to break through historical racial and gender barriers that have stained the legal institutions of our nation. Despite his exceptional and stellar career as a civil rights lawyer, federal appellate court judge, and U.S. Solicitor General, the first Black Supreme Court Justice, LDF founder Thurgood Marshall, faced significant opposition from Southern senators who stoked fear with thinly veiled race-based attacks to try to derail his nomination to the Court in 1967. Senators Strom Thurmond and James Eastland, proud white supremacists and segregationists, were two of Marshall's fiercest opponents.

“A year earlier, former LDF attorney Constance Baker Motley, a leading civil rights lawyer with unimpeachable qualifications and landmark legal victories under her belt when President Johnson nominated her to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York—including having won 9 of the ten cases she argued before the Supreme Court—was similarly disparaged by senators as she stood on the cusp of becoming the first Black woman to hold a federal judgeship. Delaying her confirmation by seven months, Sen. Eastland went as far as to label her a Communist—a false designation that served a similar purpose during the era of McCarthyism as the scaremongering around Critical Race Theory (CRT) does today.

“Even with such division, both Marshall and Motley were confirmed with a bipartisan vote of the Senate in the 1960s. Fifty years later, Republican senators on the Senate Judiciary Committee failed this moment. However, the full Senate still has the opportunity to come together across party lines to confirm Judge Jackson. We call on its members to do so expeditiously.”

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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. LDF 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. Follow LDF on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).