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LDF Welcomes New Board Members Ron Wilson and Kenji Yoshino

Today, the [Legal Defense Fund](#) (LDF) announced the addition of two new members of its Board of Directors: Ron Wilson, renowned civil rights attorney, and cooperating attorney with LDF, and Kenji Yoshino, Chief Justice Earl Warren Professor of Constitutional Law at NYU School of Law and faculty director of the Meltzer Center for Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging.

“Ron Wilson and Kenji Yoshino are excellent additions to the LDF’s Board of Directors,” said Board co-chair Angela Vallot. “Each brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise in civil rights that is especially vital as LDF navigates the legal complexities, opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. We welcome them warmly and look forward to the fresh perspectives and sharp insights they will offer.”

“Joining us with a deep understanding of the most pressing civil rights issues impacting our society today, Ron Wilson and Kenji Yoshino will provide extraordinary expertise and perspectives to LDF’s work,” said Board co-chair Kim Koopersmith. “Advancing voting rights, reimagining public safety, and navigating threats to equitable education and the truthful telling of history are all priorities for the organization and both Mr. Wilson and Mr. Yoshino possess unique experience that will serve us well in helping to guide and support LDF’s continued success.”

“I am thrilled by the addition of Ron Wilson and Kenji Yoshino to LDF’s esteemed Board of Directors,” said LDF President and Director-Counsel Janai Nelson. “I also am excited that Mr. Wilson, who is a longtime cooperating attorney with LDF, will be joining the organization in this capacity. As exceptional leaders in the field of civil rights law, both Mr. Wilson and Mr. Yoshino embody the values and principles that define LDF’s commitment to advancing racial justice. Their lifelong dedication to advancing equity and justice through scholarship, litigation, and advocacy align directly with our mission, and I am confident they will play a critical role in driving our vision towards a more inclusive, multi-racial democracy.”

Ron Wilson is a civil rights icon known for his far-reaching litigation and advocacy. Since graduating from law school in 1975, Mr. Wilson has been engaged in the private

practice of law—primarily public interest and civil rights litigation. He is a cooperating attorney with LDF, handling primarily employment and voting rights cases, and a former board member of the American Civil Liberties Union of Louisiana. Mr. Wilson has litigated numerous cases in the areas of housing discrimination, employment discrimination, school desegregation, voting rights, police misconduct, prison conditions, separation of church and state, freedom of speech, freedom of association, due process of law and equal protection. He is especially well-known for several voting rights cases which have had a significant impact in the state of Louisiana.

“The Legal Defense Fund is the pre-eminent civil rights organization in the United States when it comes to protecting constitutional and civil rights,” said Mr. Wilson. “There will be many attempts in the future seeking to significantly minimize, if not altogether obliterate, those rights. Having had the privilege of serving as a cooperating attorney since the 1980s, it is both an honor and a privilege to be a member of LDF’s Board of Directors, an organization that works indefatigably to make certain that those challenges do not succeed.”

As a scholar, leader and educator, Kenji Yoshino specializes in constitutional law, antidiscrimination law, and law and literature. Mr. Yoshino has been published in major academic journals, as well as more popular forums such as the *Los Angeles Times*, the *New York Times*, and the *Washington Post*. He is the author of four books, including his latest book (co-authored with David Glasgow), *Say the Right Thing: How to Talk About Identity, Diversity, and Justice*. Yoshino currently serves on the Oversight Board for Meta, the Board of the Brennan Center for Justice, on advisory boards for diversity and inclusion for Morgan Stanley and Charter Communications, and on the board of his children’s school. A graduate of Harvard, Oxford, and Yale, Mr. Yoshino has won numerous awards for his teaching and scholarship, including the American Bar Association’s Silver Gavel Award, the Peck medal in jurisprudence, and NYU’s Distinguished Teaching Award.

“In teaching Constitutional Law for the past quarter century, I have often alluded to the work of Thurgood Marshall as evidence that one can achieve intellectual and moral genius in the law,” said Mr. Yoshino. “It is the honor of a lifetime to join the organization he founded. I look forward to serving LDF as it advances its critical mission to achieve racial justice, equality, and a more inclusive society.”

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Founded in 1940, the Legal Defense Fund (LDF) is the nation’s first civil rights law organization. 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 Legal Defense Fund or LDF. Please note that 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.