



For Immediate Release
Tuesday, November 29, 2022

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

LDF Welcomes Tona Boyd as Its New Associate Director-Counsel

Today, the [Legal Defense Fund](#) (LDF) announced that Tona Boyd, who most recently served as Special Counsel and Special Assistant to the President in the White House Counsel's Office in the Biden-Harris Administration, where she worked to advance President Biden's agenda related to racial justice, equity, and judicial nominations, has been named Associate Director-Counsel for the nation's leading civil rights law organization.

In this role, which she assumes on January 9, 2023, Ms. Boyd will work in partnership with LDF's eighth President and Director-Counsel Janai Nelson and LDF's senior leadership team to set and execute the strategic direction of the organization's legal programs, operations, and administration.

As a member of the White House Counsel's Office, she provided legal advice to the President and executive agencies and led policy development on criminal justice reform, including policing, sentencing, clemency, drug policy, and community violence intervention, as well as civil rights – including hate crimes and domestic terrorism.

"I am thrilled to welcome Tona Boyd to LDF to help lead this organization at a critical moment of transformation in our country," said Ms. Nelson. "Her stellar credentials, longstanding commitment to advancing racial justice, exemplary history of public service, and extensive experience in policy, advocacy, and litigation will expand LDF's capacity to fulfill its mission and serve its clients with excellence. As a leader on critical policy initiatives in federal government, her expertise will complement the outstanding leadership on our program teams. I look forward to the work we will do together in service of Black communities, strengthening our democracy, and achieving equal justice under law."

"I am honored to join the Legal Defense Fund, an organization with a long and storied history of advancing racial justice and equity," said Ms. Boyd. "This is an inflection point for our democracy, and I look forward to bringing my experience in government, law, and policy to bear on the issues most deeply impacting the lives of Black Americans and to do so in collaboration with LDF's passionate and dedicated staff. As we prepare for the challenges to come in the new year, it is imperative that we take a strategic approach to utilizing all the tools at our disposal to fulfill LDF's mission of defending and advancing the full dignity and citizenship of Black people in America."

As a senior member of the judicial nominations team, Ms. Boyd supported the selection, preparation, and confirmation of federal judicial nominees, including D.C. Circuit and [Supreme Court nominee Ketanji Brown Jackson](#), as well as the full slate of the United States Sentencing Commission appointees. During the time that she served on the judicial nominations team,

President Biden nominated, and the Senate confirmed, an historic number of federal judges of unprecedented diversity.

Prior to joining the Biden-Harris administration, Ms. Boyd was Chief Counsel and Senior Legal Advisor to United States Senator Cory A. Booker on the Senate Judiciary Committee. There, she led a team responsible for providing the Senator with legal and political analysis of issues related to criminal justice, racial justice, civil rights, immigration, antitrust, intellectual property, privacy and technology, firearms, constitutional law, and judicial and executive nominations. Ms. Boyd worked closely with Senator Booker and other lawmakers to draft and negotiate the Justice in Policing Act, which outlined an agenda for modernizing policing and set forth a framework for greater law enforcement accountability.

Ms. Boyd obtained her law degree from Harvard Law School, where she received the Dean's Award for Community Leadership and served as an editor of the *Civil Rights Civil Liberties Law Review*. She graduated *summa cum laude* from the University of Notre Dame with a degree in Political Science and Spanish and a minor in Peace Studies. While at Notre Dame, she was named the Alumni Association Distinguished Undergraduate of the Year and received the Yarrow Award for Outstanding Undergraduate Achievement in Peace Studies. She later received the Notre Dame Black Alumni Exemplar Award.

###

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.