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CARDIN, WHITEHOUSE JOIN CIVIL RIGHTS LEADERS IN SUPPORT OF ATTORNEY GENERAL NOMINEE

Washington, DC – U.S. Senators **Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD)** and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), both members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, were joined on Capitol Hill today for a press conference with the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR), the NAACP, the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), and the National Women’s Law Center (NWLC) to urge the swift confirmation of Eric Holder for U.S. Attorney General.

“Eric Holder is an experienced and dedicated public servant who will restore trust and confidence in a Department of Justice that recently has strayed far from its role as a non-partisan protector of the rule of law and the civil rights of all Americans,” **said Senator Cardin**. “I have no doubt that Mr. Holder will be an Attorney General who will serve the American people and not just the White House. He will vigorously enforce our civil rights laws to protect all Americans from unlawful discrimination and help close our nation’s justice gap.”

“From my seat on the Judiciary Committee, I’ve seen up close the damage the Bush Administration inflicted on the Department of Justice,” **said Senator Whitehouse**, a former U.S. Attorney and Attorney General for Rhode Island. “I know Eric Holder, and believe that no one is better suited than he to repair that damage, restore the Department’s independence, and rebuild morale in its superb professional staff. He is, without question, the best person for this difficult job.”

Senators Cardin and Whitehouse will take part in confirmation hearings with Attorney General-designate Holder next week. Holder’s character and impressive legal credentials have earned the civil rights community’s full support. Civil rights leaders made the following statements:

“Prompt Senate confirmation will allow Eric Holder to quickly work to restore morale and the Department’s historic reputation for professionalism, fairness and impartial justice. It will allow the Department of Justice to return to its mission: diligent, vigorous enforcement of the law and protection of the rights of all Americans, rich or poor, regardless of political affiliation or ideology.” – **Wade Henderson, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights President**

“Eric Holder’s historic nomination to serve as Attorney General could not have come at a more crucial time. Eric Holder is uniquely qualified to lead the Department of Justice out of the

quagmire in which it currently finds itself. He is the best qualified candidate to help the Department of Justice reinvigorate itself and regain its rightful place as our country's enforcer of our civil rights, voting rights, employment rights and housing rights laws. Furthermore, Eric Holder's background and his experience make him exceptionally qualified to tackle the issues surrounding law enforcement misconduct, issues that have continued to plague African-American communities and communities of color throughout the United States." – **Ben Jealous, NAACP President and CEO**

"I have known Eric Holder for many years and can attest to his commitment to justice, diversity, excellence, and to being a fair and independent voice. He will serve this Administration well as Attorney General." – **Janet Murguía, National Council of La Raza President**

"Mr. Holder's background and demonstrated commitment to equal justice and to the enforcement of our nation's core constitutional and legal protections make him the right person for this key position, and having the right person at the Department of Justice has never been more important." – **Marcia Greenberger, National Women's Law Center Co-President**

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