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CARDIN, MIKULSKI PRAISE OBAMA NOMINEES FOR FOURTH CIRCUIT AND DOJ CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION

Washington, DC – U.S. Senators Benjamin L. Cardin and Barbara A. Mikulski (Both D-MD), participated today in the nomination hearing for Judge **Andre M. Davis**, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fourth Circuit, and **Thomas E. Perez**, to be Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division, Department of Justice (DOJ). Senator Cardin, a member of the Judiciary Committee that will consider the nomination, presided over the hearing. Senator Mikulski, along with **former Senator Paul Sarbanes (D-MD)** provided formal introductions for Davis, who currently serves as a U.S. District Judge for the District of Maryland. Senator Mikulski also introduced Perez, currently the Secretary of Labor, Licensing, & Regulation for the State of Maryland, to the Judiciary Committee members.

“I cannot think of a better choice for this seat on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. Judge Davis has an extremely long and distinguished career in the Maryland legal community, and has deep roots in our state. Born and raised in Baltimore and a fellow University of Maryland Law School alumnus, Judge Davis has an exception legal record,” **said Senator Cardin.** “I was pleased to join with Senator Mikulski in recommending Judge Davis to President Obama for nomination to the vacant Maryland seat. It has been refreshing to work with an administration open to finding quality, consensus candidates for such critical positions.”

“For eight years, I have pressed for a qualified jurist to fill the Maryland vacancy on the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals. First in partnership with Senator Sarbanes, now with Senator Cardin,” **said Senator Mikulski,** Maryland’s senior U.S. Senator. “This is the seat held by the late Judge Murnaghan, who was a true legal giant with deep roots of civic engagement as well as extraordinary judicial competence. We now have a worthy nominee to fill this seat. I am honored and proud to introduce Andre Davis as President Obama’s nominee to serve on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. He is a man of the highest caliber. He is a man of great integrity, keen intellect, and sound judicial experience and temperament. Andre Davis has diverse and deep roots in the Maryland community. He is a distinguished judge. He will be an excellent addition to the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals. ”

“The DOJ has been broken and abused for the last eight years. I consistently expressed my grave concern with the mismanagement of the Civil Rights Division and overall politicization of the DOJ under the Bush Administration,” **said Senator Cardin.** “Tom Perez has been an aggressive champion for justice and the public good his entire career. His appointment to lead the Civil Rights Division will help restore needed integrity, trust, and balance to the career staff charged with protecting the civil liberties of all Americans.”

“I am proud to introduce Tom Perez, President Obama’s nominee to lead the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division,” **Senator Mikulski said.** “Secretary Perez is well suited for this critical position, though we will be sorry to lose him as Maryland’s Secretary of Labor, where he quickly re-energized and reinvigorated the Department. More than ever, the Department of Justice needs someone to restore morale to hardworking career employees and public confidence. Tom Perez is the right man for the job.”

JUDGE ANDRE M. DAVIS

Judge Davis is being nominated for the Fourth Circuit seat left vacant by the death of Judge Francis Murnaghan. Judge Davis has been praised by lawyers in Maryland as a smart, evenhanded, fair, and open-minded judge. He has served as a judge for 22 years. He served as a state District Court judge for three years, a state Circuit Court judge for five years, and has now served as a federal district court judge in Maryland for 14 years. As a federal judge over the past 14 years, he has presided over the closing of approximately 5,300 cases. Of that number, Judge Davis has presided over approximately 4,300 cases that went to verdict or judgment based on a trial or decision he made. He has handled the full mix of criminal and civil cases, including both bench and jury trials. Judge Davis received a “well qualified” rating from the American Bar Association’s Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary.

If confirmed, Judge Davis would be the third African-American judge to serve on the Fourth Circuit, which includes Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. This circuit has one of the largest populations of African-American residents of any federal circuit outside of the District of Columbia.

THOMAS E. PEREZ

Secretary Perez has an impressive range of experience in civil rights issues as well as management experience. He has had a long and distinguished career in public service and is uniquely qualified to help get the Civil Rights Division back on the right track. After law school, Perez clerked for a year and then went on to join the Department of Justice, where he served for 10 years. He began at the Civil Rights Division as a trial attorney in the Criminal Section. He moved up the ladder within the division, first as a trial attorney in the Criminal Section, then as deputy chief of the Criminal Section, and finally as Deputy Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. Perez also was detailed to Senator Edward Kennedy’s office as his principal advisor on civil rights, criminal justice, juvenile justice and constitutional issues. During his time at the Department of Justice, within the Civil Rights Division, he took on white supremacists, police brutality, corruption, and many additional civil rights violations. He received for his work the department’s second highest honor, the Attorney General’s Distinguished Service Award.

Secretary Perez currently serves in Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley cabinet as the Secretary of the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation.

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