

December 8, 2020

Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President-Elect of the United States of America
Presidential Transition Office
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear President-Elect Biden:

We write to urge you to nominate Julie Su as United States Secretary of Labor. At a time when the role of Labor Secretary could not be more critical to the nation's well-being and the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, there is no better person than Julie Su to lead a Labor Department that centers the needs of working people. As the Secretary for the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency, the largest state labor department in the country, Ms. Su currently leads an agency of more than 11,000 employees with a \$26.4 billion budget. In this role, she oversees worker safety, paid leave, and jobless benefit programs for nearly 20 million Californians, well-preparing her to be immediately effective upon stepping into the role of Labor Secretary. Over a career spanning decades dedicated to advancing justice for under-represented communities, she has shown herself to be a visionary and innovative leader who will be able to maximize the impact the Labor Department can have in addressing economic inequality and racial injustice.

Over the course of nearly ten years in office, Julie Su has developed a track record of reinvigorating labor agencies to deliver on their mission. She has redefined effective labor law enforcement through targeted, industry-specific investigative approaches, responsive partnerships with labor unions and worker organizations, creative public education campaigns, and smart relationships with employers and industry associations. Her deep familiarity with the systemic barriers faced by low-wage workers, who are often immigrants and/or people of color, has allowed her to pioneer successful new approaches to combating the scourges of worker misclassification and retaliation. Her nuanced understanding of the intersections between racism, sexism, and labor exploitation will be urgently needed in a role that has significant responsibility for bringing greater gender and racial equality to U.S. workplaces.

Before her time in California government, Ms. Su spent fifteen years at Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Los Angeles where she was known for combining impact litigation with multi-racial organizing, community education, policy reform, coalition building, and media work. She was among the lead counsel in a federal lawsuit that held brand name garment manufacturers and retailers liable for the slave labor conditions of subcontractors' sweatshops, obtaining a multi-million dollar settlement and earning the workers involved legal immigration status. The cases she litigated, in addition to her legislative advocacy, helped spur the passage of AB633, a landmark law that ensured brand name retailers would be held responsible if the garment workers who sewed their apparel experienced wage theft.

President-Elect Biden, you have pledged to make your cabinet the most diverse in history with leaders who look like and reflect the breadth and diversity of our country. As a woman of color who grew up in an immigrant household, Julie Su embodies that diversity and shares your commitment to racial equity. She has also received the MacArthur "Genius Grant" and has been named one of the "Fifty Most Noteworthy Women Alumni" of Harvard Law School. She has spent her career passionately advocating for

marginalized workers and has managed and built the most diverse team at the highest levels of state government in the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency. It is a critical time for the leadership of women and people of color in our country, and Julie Su is a proven leader who will represent and promote equity, equal opportunities, and inclusion for all.

The COVID-19 pandemic, rising rates of economic inequality, and this year's reckoning on the need for racial justice and equity demand that we put people at the center of our rebuilding efforts in 2021 and beyond. We must expand the role that a responsive government can play in protecting workers' rights and advancing economic security. Julie Su is the right person to lead this critical work at the Labor Department during this unprecedented time, and we give her our strongest endorsement.

Sincerely yours,

National Organizations

Advancement Project, National Office
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - AAJC
Center for Popular Democracy
Centro de los Derechos del Migrante
Coalition to Abolish Slavery & Trafficking
Community Change Action
Equal Justice Society
Family Values @ Work
Farmworker Justice
Haitian Bridge Alliance
Legal Resource Center
Japanese American Citizens League
Justice Action Center
Laotian American National Alliance
MomsRising
National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA)
National Asian Pacific American Families Against Substance Abuse
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
National Association of Asian American Professionals
National Black Worker Center
National Center for Housing & Child Welfare
National Center for Law and Economic Justice
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans
National Immigration Law Center
National Immigration Law Center Immigrant Justice Fund
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC)
National Legal Advocacy Network
National Partnership for Women & Families
OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates
One Fair Wage, Inc
Resilience Force

SPLC Action Fund
The Center for Asian Pacific American Women
UFW Foundation
UndocuBlack Network
Unemployed Workers United
United Farm Workers of America
United We Dream

Regional, State, and Local Organizations

Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Chicago
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Los Angeles
Asian Resources, Inc
Bet Tzedek Legal Services
Border Workers United
California Association of Food Banks
California Employment Lawyers Association
California Immigrant Policy Center
Center for the Advancement of Racial Equity at Work
Center for Workers' Rights
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)
Connecticut Shoreline Indivisible
CRLA Foundation
Employee Rights Center
Foundation for Advocacy, Inclusion & Resources
Garment Worker Center
IE Black Worker Center Project
Inland Empire Labor Council, AFL-CIO
Justice For Muslims Collective
KIWA
La Raza Centro Legal
Legal Aid of Marin
Maintenance Cooperation Trust Fund (MCTF)
Northwest Workers' Justice Project
Ohio Immigrant Alliance
Public Counsel
Public Justice Center
Santa Clara County Wage Theft Coalition
Southern California Resource Hub for Black Worker Organizing
Still Waters Anti-trafficking Program of RCHP-AHC
UC Irvine Law School, Immigrant Rights Clinic
UCLA Labor Center
Unidad Latina en Acción CT
Wage Justice Center
Women's Employment Rights Clinic, Golden Gate University
Worker Justice Center of New York
Worksafe