



## CONFIRM CAITLIN HALLIGAN TO THE D.C. COURT OF APPEALS

December 5, 2011

Dear Senator:

The National Partnership for Women & Families strongly supports the confirmation of Caitlin Halligan to the federal court of appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. We urge the Senate to vote to invoke cloture and confirm her nomination.

The National Partnership for Women & Families promotes fairness in the workplace, quality affordable health care and policies that help women and men meet the dual demands of work and family. Through our work, we understand the critical role that judges and the courts play in protecting our most cherished freedoms. Their decisions govern how our workplaces function, the type of health care we receive, the extent of our financial obligations, our home life and living conditions, and the well-being of our families.

We depend on judges to give equal consideration to all parties involved in a dispute and to apply the law faithfully without regard to politics, bias, or personal agendas or philosophy. We also depend on our court system to resolve disputes as efficiently as possible, with the knowledge that justice delayed is justice denied. We urge you to confirm the nomination of Caitlin Halligan, due to her exemplary credentials and her demonstrated commitment to equal justice.

As judicial vacancies across the country threaten the ability of Americans to vindicate their rights in court, the Senate should put an end to procedural roadblocks and act quickly to confirm eminently qualified judicial nominees like Caitlin Halligan. Ms. Halligan was nominated more than a year ago and her nomination was approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee nine months ago. The D.C. Circuit is short three judges, and its caseload demands a full bench. The Senate must address this shortage by confirming Ms. Halligan before the end of the year.

Ms. Halligan has an exemplary legal background. She is currently the general counsel to the New York County District Attorney's Office and previously served as the solicitor general of the state of New York. As solicitor general, she was counsel of record in more than 50 cases before the Supreme Court and argued cases in five.

Prior to joining the government, Ms. Halligan was a partner and head of the appellate practice of Weil Gotshal and Manges, LLP and taught as an adjunct professor at the Georgetown University Law Center and Columbia Law School. Ms. Halligan also has significant experience working within the court system, having clerked for Judge Patricia M. Wald on the D.C. Circuit and Justice Steven Breyer on the U.S. Supreme Court.

Ms. Halligan's professional credentials are matched by her academic background. She graduated magna cum laude, Order of the Coif, from Georgetown University Law Center, served as the

managing editor of the Georgetown Law Journal, and received the John M. Olin Law and Economics Fellowship while at Georgetown.

Given Ms. Halligan's qualifications, failure to invoke cloture would be unprecedented – setting a dangerous standard that could make future confirmations almost impossible to achieve. Ms. Halligan has precisely the kind of stellar background and credentials that have rightfully won support from senators on both sides of the aisle in the past. In recognition of her outstanding qualifications, her nomination has garnered praise and support from diverse legal scholars and practitioners. Her background also prompted the ABA's Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary to give her a "Highly Qualified" rating by unanimous agreement.

In addition to bringing extensive qualifications to the court, Ms. Halligan would increase the D.C. Circuit's diversity. She would be only the sixth female judge in the 118-year history of the D.C. Circuit. When our courts are diverse and more reflective of the population, people around the country can have more confidence that judges understand the real-world implications of their rulings.

In short, Ms. Halligan is a superb nominee, and she has long deserved an up-or-down vote. We urge the Senate to vote to invoke cloture and close debate on Caitlin Halligan's nomination, and then to act quickly to confirm her to serve on the court. Her impressive resume, unassailable credentials and dedication to the rule of law make her a supremely qualified nominee. Her confirmation would bring an important depth of knowledge and needed diversity to the bench.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Ness", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Debra L. Ness  
President