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IN SUPPORT OF DEVAL PATRICK TO HEAD THE CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION OF THE  
JUSTICE DEPARTMENT

Mr. DeCONCINI, Mr. President, I rise in strong support of the President's nomination of Deval Patrick to head the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department. Mr. Patrick is an accomplished lawyer, with experience in both civil rights litigation and private practice. Throughout his legal career, he has demonstrated a passionate commitment to civil rights.

His personal and professional background is impressive. Mr. Patrick hails from an impoverished neighborhood on the south side of Chicago. From there, he went to Harvard College where he graduated cum laude. After graduation he spent a year in the Sudan and Nigeria as a Rockefeller fellow. Upon completion of his fellowship he returned to Harvard for law school, where he had the great distinction of winning the Ames Moot Court Competition.

After earning his law degree, Deval Patrick clerked for Judge Reinhardt on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. He then joined the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund as a staff attorney. In this position, he defended death row inmates and litigated many voting rights cases.

Even after leaving the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Mr. Patrick remained active in civil rights issues. He has devoted approximately 30 percent of his time since joining the Boston law firm of Hill and Barlow to pro bono work, most of which were civil rights cases. He obtained a landmark settlement on behalf of a large number of African-American borrowers who were victims of a lending scam. He also drafted an amicus brief in a successful Supreme Court challenge to the racially motivated use of preemptory challenges in a civil case.

There is a need in America and in the Justice Department for lawyers like Mr. Patrick. Last year, the civil rights division filed a record number of cases and launched a record number of investigations. Under the leadership of Attorney General Janet Reno and Deval Patrick, I am certain the Civil Rights Division will continue to eradicate discrimination in America. In addition, I believe Mr. Patrick serves as an important role model to our young people today. He has dedicated his life and committed his work and talents to the struggle of overcoming racism and preserving the basic concepts of fair play and due process in our society.

Mr. Patrick's background clearly demonstrates his commitment to civil rights. I am confident that Mr. Patrick will continue in the struggle to uphold our freedoms by protecting our civil rights. He has my strongest support for this nomination, and I also urge my colleagues to lend their support to this outstanding candidate.

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