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March 10, 2016

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Grassley
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Reid, Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Leahy:

We, the undersigned, are Attorneys General representing 19 states, the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. We are united in the belief that the United States Senate must act promptly to consider a nominee to fill the vacancy on the United States Supreme Court. We believe that a failure to do so would undermine the rule of law and ultimately impair the functioning of state governments within our federal system.

The Constitution clearly sets out the process for filling a Supreme Court vacancy. The President has a duty to make a nomination. President Obama, duly elected twice by the American people, has pledged to do so. The Senate, then, has the responsibility to consider and approve or disapprove the nomination. While simple, this is the law and it should be followed.

Throughout our history, the Senate —without exception— has acted promptly to consider qualified nominees to the Supreme Court. The longest the Senate has ever taken to confirm a President's Supreme Court nominee is 125 days and since 1975, a nominee has, on average, received a vote by the full Senate within 67 days of his or her nomination. Moreover, every nominee since 1875 has received a confirmation hearing. And since 1900, six justices have been confirmed during election years, including Justice Anthony Kennedy, who was confirmed in the final year of the Reagan Administration.

The states and territories have a unique and pressing interest in a full and functioning Supreme Court. We rely on the Supreme Court to resolve questions of federal law, to resolve disputes

between the states, to evaluate the constitutionality of state laws, and to ensure that federal and constitutional law are interpreted and applied uniformly across all states and territories. The Supreme Court not only resolves disputes that implicate States' vital interests, it often does so in closely divided cases.

We urge the Senate to carry out its responsibilities by allowing for full consideration of a qualified nominee to the Supreme Court by holding a hearing and a vote without unnecessary delay.

Sincerely,



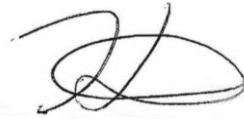
Kamala Harris
California Attorney General



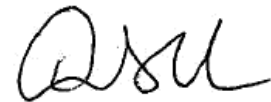
George Jepsen
Connecticut Attorney General



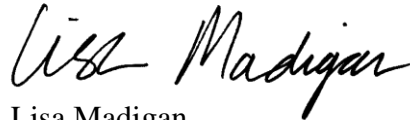
Matt Denn
Delaware Attorney General



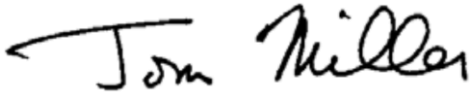
Karl A. Racine
District of Columbia Attorney General



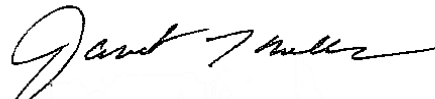
Douglas Chin
Hawaii Attorney General



Lisa Madigan
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Tom Miller
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Janet Mills
Maine Attorney General



Brian Frosh
Maryland Attorney General



Maura Healey
Massachusetts Attorney General



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