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Center for Teen Empowerment ♦ 384 Warren Street Boston, MA 02119 ♦ 617-536-4266

September 13, 2021

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

RE: NOMINATION OF DA RACHAEL ROLLINS TO US ATTORNEY-DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

It is my distinct privilege to write this letter both personally, and on behalf of The Center for Teen Empowerment, Inc., an agency based in Roxbury and Somerville, Massachusetts, and Rochester New York. As the Executive Director of this 29-year-old nonprofit organization where hundreds of BIPOC youth each year become the agents for change in Black and Brown communities affected harshly by racial inequities, poverty, violence, and other forms of systemic oppression, I write to express my strong allegiance to and support for the nomination of Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins for the position of United States Attorney for the District of Massachusetts. We fully understand at Teen Empowerment what it means to be an agent for change especially for communities of people with histories of discrimination and how critical it is to have leaders like DA Rollins who can effect real systemic change.

DA Rollins is a stellar humanitarian and an advocate for the people she represents, serves, and in whom she believes. She is a candidate known and respected for her unflinching and articulate voice in speaking out about and against the ongoing racism in our criminal justice system.

Community leaders including myself have had the opportunity to work alongside her and know her veracity with which she carries out her mission, beliefs, and commitments, and her passion with which she leads her constituents to positive outcomes. From my personal life experience, and my work with youth who deal each day with the disruptions in their communities, I know full well Rollins' commitment to addressing inequities in the criminal justice system and to maintaining her vow to increase low-level, non-violent offenses in the communities of Boston,



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Chelsea, Revere, and Winthrop. During her tenure as the Suffolk County District Attorney, DA Rollins has been a role model of strength, truth, and honor for the many communities within Boston, particularly communities of young people. In fact, she is a role model for the nation!

DA Rollins has been an unwavering warrior in defending a criminal justice system that will work equally for all people. She knows - and she leads by example - those offenses driven by poverty, mental illness, resource insecurity, and substance use disorders must be dealt with differently, not through incarceration but through effective treatment. She is NOT soft on crime! Hardly. She understands victims and victims' rights. But to approach people who offend with the same enforcements makes no sense. There are serious offenders, and those driven by poverty and illness. The treatments and consequences need to be different.

I believe that the leadership of DA Rollins has been brave and bold and based on fact. Much like our work at Teen Empowerment, she has always shown a goal towards both improving individual outcomes as well as the overall safety and quality of her communities.

In closing, DA Rollins is both the first female ever elected as District Attorney in Suffolk County and the first woman of color ever elected District Attorney in Massachusetts. I am also proud to say that since DA Rollins took office and created the Integrity Review Bureau, over 240 years of wrongful convictions have been overturned by the Bureau.

The Center for Teen Empowerment, Inc. supports, embraces, and applauds President Joe Biden's nomination of DA Rollins as the state's highest federal prosecutor. We stand with and beside DA Rollins.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me anytime at 617-794-7486.

Most sincerely yours,

Abrigal Forrester
Executive Director

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