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National Association for Multicultural Education

NAME Statement on Confirmation of Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson

The [National Association for Multicultural Education](#) (NAME), like much of the rest of the country, celebrates the U.S. Senate's vote on April 7, confirming U.S. Appeals Court Judge [Ketanji Brown Jackson](#) as the first African American woman to hold a seat on the U.S. Supreme Court. Her appointment to the highest court in the country fulfills a campaign promise of President Joe Biden to appoint a Black woman if a seat opened up. She will replace Justice [Stephen Breyer](#), who earlier announced that he will be retiring this summer. Jackson will be sworn in at that time.

When Jackson is seated as a justice, the Supreme Court for the first time in its 233-year history, will have [four women justices](#) — Jackson, 51; Sonia Sotomayor, 67; Elena Kagan, 61; and Amy Coney Barrett, 50. While this representation gives pause to celebrate, NAME reminds that only three of the four women justices have advocated for the rights of women in their careers, recognizing that representation is a necessary, but insufficient civil rights goal.

Indeed, the racist, sexist, publicly disrespectful treatment that Justice Brown Jackson had to endure in the Senate confirmation process reinforces the anti-Black women context the U.S. continues to elevate. During the hours-long Senate Judiciary Committee hearings, the imminently qualified Jackson showed great professionalism and patient restraint by putting up with Republicans' intentionally inaccurate and offensive attacks on her record. The delay in the vote due to Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky arriving late, and Sens. Lindsey Graham and Jim Inhofe voting from the GOP cloakroom because they were not wearing ties as is required by Senate rules on the floor represent intentional public displays of disrespect for Jackson, and for all Black women.

Like so many Black women before her, Justice Brown Jackson modeled poise and professionalism in the face of blatant lies and intentional white supremacist disrespect. No person should have to face such targeted attacks, and yet the hearing revealed, yet again, how U.S. politics normalizes anti-Blackness, especially in relation to Black women. NAME understands that such behavior intentionally reinforces the need for the public to be intimately aware of the teachings of [critical race theory](#) as well as [The 1619 Project](#) to fully understand how racism continues to negatively impact African Americans.

Yet such healing, community-driven movements remain open targets for censure and elimination in schools and colleges by Republican-led state legislatures nationwide as well as local school boards throughout the country. NAME strongly encourages our Democratic lawmakers to stand proudly by educators, parents and students to honor Justice Brown Jackson by ensuring educators are adequately prepared and supported to teach children a robust multicultural education that honors the many Black women who have led the way towards a more just union.

NAME knows that the 6-3 conservative slant of the Supreme Court will not change as a result of Jackson being confirmed as a justice, however, despite all of the negativity, the progress shown by her appointment cannot be ignored and must be celebrated.