

Supporting Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson's Historic Nomination

Promoting a Positive Narrative - April 2022

President Biden made history by nominating Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to serve as Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court and people have shared their enthusiastic support across the nation. Nevertheless, Judge Jackson has been subjected to hostile and disrespectful questioning from senators, which reflects how the standards of civility shift when a Black woman is in question. Given these attacks, we must continue to do the hard work of contextualizing this moment concerning what it means for the future of our country. We must continue to highlight the significance of this nomination for the aspirations we have toward breaking down systemic barriers that stand in the way of progress. We need Supreme Court Justices who reflect the integrity and honor that Judge Jackson has shown throughout her career.

The Opportunity Agenda (TOA) strongly encourages communicators, advocates, and anyone concerned with social justice to uplift the importance of this nomination. Below is communications advice for talking about Judge Jackson's nomination informed by recent opinion research.

Public Opinion

Despite attempts to tarnish Judge Jackson's reputation, a Gallup poll found that Judge Jackson enjoys the highest support of any Supreme Court nominee since Chief Justice John Roberts, with 58 percent of people in the United States in favor of her confirmation.¹ An NBC National Poll found she had "the highest net support rating of any Supreme Court nominee since 2005."²

This polling is likely due to her extraordinary background and credentials, along with the advocacy of groups like [#SheWillRise](#) and others. Through consistent message engagement, advocates can help promote a media and cultural landscape that is favorable to Judge Jackson while also effectively pivoting toward calling out unwarranted attacks when they arise.

Values-Based Messages

Because our research consistently shows that leading with values is an effective approach to communication, we encourage people to adopt a "VPSA" format in drafting their messages about Judge Jackson. We have described VPSA below and provided sample messages that adopt this format.

¹ Jeffrey Jones, Supreme Court Nominee Jackson's Support Tied for Highest, Gallup, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/390956/supreme-court-nominee-jackson-support-tied-highest.aspx>

² Liz Brown-Kaiser, NBC News Political Unit, Mar. 29, 2022, <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/meet-the-press/blog/meet-press-blog-latest-news-analysis-data-driving-political-discussion-n988541?featureFlag=true#ncrd1293170>.

- Leading with **VALUES** creates broad points of agreement and shared goals that will resonate with nearly any audience.
- Being explicit about the **PROBLEM**, and how it threatens shared values, creates a sense of urgency and connects individual stories to broader systems and dynamics.
- Offering a **SOLUTION** gives audiences a sense of hope and motivation. The best solutions are connected directly to the problem offered and make clear where the responsibility for change lies.
- Assigning an **ACTION** gives the audience a concrete next step that they can picture themselves doing and creates a feeling of agency.

Sample Actions

TOA encourages people to continue their advocacy for Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson by:

- 1) Writing newspaper editorials or blogs that connect Judge Jackson’s nomination to their own shared experience.
- 2) Posting on social media to celebrate her background and highlight how she reflects our shared values.
- 3) Talking with those close to you about the significance of her nomination and likely confirmation to the Supreme Court.

Sample VPSA Messages

Judge Jackson is Committed to Equal Justice Under Law

The words “Equal Justice Under Law” are engraved into the entrance of the U.S. Supreme Court, and Judge Jackson’s historic nomination illustrates that this country is slowly coming closer to this ideal. Judge Jackson is on track to be the first Black woman to serve on the Supreme Court and has led a life of public service through her work as a judge, public defender, and on the U.S. Sentencing Commission.

Yet, some have tried to question her background because of this public service. As a judge and lawyer, she worked to ensure that everyone she served was treated fairly and equally. She was fair, measured, and consistent in reflecting the value of “Equal Justice Under Law,” but opponents are trying to distort her record.

Consequently, it is important to push for Judge Jackson’s speedy confirmation to the Supreme Court given her commitment to equal justice. We must continue to talk about the importance of her nomination. It is historic not only because Judge Jackson is a Black woman, but because she would help to realize a foundational goal of our highest court—Equal Justice Under Law.



Judge Jackson Reflects the Ambitions of Americans

The American identity is inseparable from the ideal of achieving full opportunity, where everyone has a fair chance to reach their full potential. Judge Brown’s story as a public-school graduate from Miami to a current nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court is an example of a classic American success story. James Truslow Adams described this dream as “that dream of a land...with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement...a dream of social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position.” Judge Jackson worked hard in the face of extraordinary challenges and has achieved an exemplary stature as a jurist and lawyer committed to public service.

For far too long, access to education, advancement in the legal profession, and countless other hurdles has stood in the way of Black women aspiring to someday join the Supreme Court. Nevertheless, Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson has worked hard to obtain preeminent qualifications that exemplify what is possible when we expand access to opportunity.

By having Ketanji Brown Jackson as a Supreme Court Justice, the high court will be better positioned to more effectively confront those systemic hurdles that stand in the way of true opportunity and equal justice. The court will be hearing cases that might shift our access to opportunity in this country, and Judge Jackson’s background and experiences will only enrich the perspectives on the court.

In order to share your support for Judge Jackson’s speedy confirmation, tweet at your senator about why you support Judge Jackson’s confirmation to the Supreme Court, or post on social media about what this nomination means to you using #ConfirmJackson.