February 14, 2022

Chairman Sherrod Brown
Committee on Banking, Housing,
and Urban Affairs
United States Senate
534 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member Patrick Toomey
Committee on Banking, Housing,
and Urban Affairs
United States Senate
534 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Brown and Ranking Member Toomey:

We, the undersigned civil and human rights, housing, consumer, labor and faith organizations, and individuals, write to express our strong support for the nomination of Dr. Lisa D. Cook to a seat on the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve ("Board"). Dr. Cook is eminently qualified. She is the experienced leader we need to help ensure the economy continues to expand and that the Board's decisions produce an equitable recovery so that more American families—including those living in rural communities, small towns, and underserved areas—have access to economic opportunity. Her breadth of research and experience will also help ensure underserved lending institutions, like community banks and minority-owned lending institutions, can fully participate in the economy. Moreover, if confirmed, Dr. Cook would become the first Black woman to serve on the Board in its 108-year history, which would bring the Board closer to representing the rich diversity of this nation. We urge your committee to act quickly to advance this historic nomination, and we urge the Senate to promptly confirm Dr. Lisa Cook.

We have recently heard some unfair and troubling criticisms that we would like to address. Some have incorrectly asserted that in order to be a Board Governor, Dr. Cook's experience and scholarship needs to be exclusively grounded in macroeconomic policy. Others have raised concerns that President Biden's selections need greater industry representation and geographic diversity. All of these criteria would be new standards not grounded in the reality of the Board's broad functions or the background of the Board's previous Governors. We will address each unfounded criticism in turn.

For those raising the wholly unfounded criticism that Dr. Cook is somehow less qualified than other Governors, we would offer this comparison to the experience of other recent Governors, who were nominated by previous administrations.

	Kevin Warsh	**Elizabeth Duke**	**Michelle Bowman**
Nominated By	President George W. Bush, January 2006	President George W. Bush, May 2007	President Donald J. Trump, April 2018
Age at Time of Nomination	35 years old (youngest nomination in history)	54 years old	46 years old
Education	● 1992: Stanford University, A.B. in Public Policy ● 1995: Harvard Law School, J.D., *cum laude*	● 1974: University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, B.F.A. in Drama ● 1983: Old Dominion University, M.B.A.	● University of Kansas, B.S. in Advertising and Journalism ● 1996: Washburn University School of Law, J.D.

Post-Graduate Experience	● 1995-2002: Morgan Stanley, Executive Director, Mergers and Acquisitions ● 2002-2006: National Economic Council, Executive Secretary; Special Assistant to the President for Economic Policy	● 1985-2001: Bank of Tidewater, VP and Chief Financial Officer; President; CEO ● 1998: Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, Director ● 1999: Virginia Bankers Association, President ● 2001: SouthTrust Bank, EVP of Community Bank Development ● 2004: Wachovia, EVP, Merger Project Office ● TowneBank: Senior EVP and COO ● 2004-2005: American Bankers Association, Chair	● 1997-2002: U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, U.S. House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, Counsel ● 2002: FEMA, Congressional and Governmental Affairs, Director ● 2003: Department of Homeland Security, Deputy Assistant Secretary and Policy Advisor ● 2004: Bowman Group (public affairs firm in London); Republicans Abroad UK, Chair ● 2010: Farmers and Drovers Bank ($181 million in assets), VP ● 2017: Kansas Banking Commissioner
Scholarship at Time of Nomination	● "Corporate Spinoffs and Mass Tort Liability," Columbia Business Law Review, 1995. ● "Deciding to Run for Congress: An Opportunity Cost Model with Partisan Implications," American Political Science Association, 1992.	● None	● None

	Dr. Lisa D. Cook
Nominated By	President Joseph R. Biden, January 2022
Education	● Spelman College, B.A., Philosophy, *magna cum laude*, Truman Scholar ● Oxford University (England), B.A., Philosophy, Politics, and Economics, Marshall Scholar ● Université Cheikh Anta Diop (Senegal), Masters Thesis, Philosophy ● University of California (Berkeley), Ph.D., Economics
Experience	● 1997-2002: Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government, Visiting Assistant Professor; Harvard Center for International Development, Africa Research, Deputy Director; Harvard Business School, "Making Markets Work," Faculty ● 2000-2001: Treasury Department, Senior Advisor on Finance and Development; Council on Foreign Relations, International Affairs Fellow ● 2002-2005: Stanford University, Hoover Institution, National Fellow, Research Fellow ● 2005-Present: Michigan State University, Economics and International Relations, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor ● 2011-2012: White House Council of Economic Advisors, Senior Economist ● Previous Visiting Appointments: Federal Reserve Banks of New York, Chicago, Minneapolis, and Philadelphia; University of Michigan ● Present: American Economic Association, Executive Committee; National Bureau of Economic Research, Research Associate; Journal of Economic Editors, Board of Editors; Board of Directors of

	the Federal Home Loan Bank of Indianapolis; Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, Academic Advisory Council
Scholarship at Time of Nomination	● "The implications of U.S. gender and racial disparities in income and wealth inequality at each stage of the innovation process," (with Jan Gerson) Washington Center for Equitable Growth Policy Brief, July 2019. ● "Dust, Drink, and Divergence: Summaries of Nevins Prize Doctoral Dissertations," Journal of Economic History, Volume 78, Issue 2, pp. 575-610, 2018. ● "Rural Segregation and Racial Violence: Historical Effects of Spatial Racism," with Trevon Logan and John Parman, American Journal of Economics and Sociology Volume 1, Numbers 3 and 4, 2018. ● "Racial Segregation and Southern Lynching," with Trevon Logan and John Parman, Social Science History, vol 42(4), pages 635-675, 2018. ● "The Mortality Consequences of Distinctively Black Names," with Trevon D. Logan and John Parman, Explorations in Economic History, Volume 59(C), pp. 114-125 (January 2016). ● "Violence and Economic Growth: Evidence from African American Patents, 1870- 1940," Journal of Economic Growth, Volume 19, Issue 2 (June 2014), pp. 221-257. ● "Distinctively Black Names in the American Past," with Trevon D. Logan and John Parman, Explorations in Economic History, Volume 53 (July 2014), pp. 64-82. ● "The Financial and Economic Crisis: Implications for Consumer Finance and for Households in Michigan," 2012, forthcoming, Journal of Consumer Education. ● "Overcoming Discrimination by Consumers during the Age of Segregation: The Example of Garrett Morgan," Business History Review, Volume 86, Issue 2 (Summer 2012). ● "Converging to a National Lynching Database: Recent Developments and the Way Forward," Historical Methods, Volume 45, Issue 2 (March 2012). ● "Inventing Social Capital: Evidence from African American Inventors, 1843-1930," Explorations in Economic History, Volume 48, Issue 4 (December 2011), pp. 507- 518. ● "Metals or Management? Explaining Recent Economic Growth in Africa," American Economic Review, 99(2): 26874 (May 2009), with Laura Beny. ● "Trade Credit and Bank Finance: Financing Small Firms in Russia," Journal of Business Venturing, Volume 14, Numbers 5-6, (1999) pp. 493-518. ● "The Next Battleground in the Terror War," Hoover Digest 2004, No. 1. ● "Now the Hard Part," Hoover Digest 2003, No. 2. ● Various Working Papers

In light of the background of these Governors, it is incorrect to assert that a candidate's experience and scholarship needs to be exclusively grounded in macroeconomic policy in order to bring effective judgment and important lived experience to the role of Board Governor. Governor Warsh's experience on Wall Street proved helpful when developing solutions to the financial crisis. Similarly, the experience of Governors Duke and Bowman have provided valuable insights into the role of community banks in the national economy. We strongly believe that Dr. Cook's breadth of scholarship regarding the U.S. and international economies, hands-on experience in service on the Indianapolis Federal Home Loan Bank Board, and extensive research on the impact of racial inequality in the U.S. economy, as well as her lived experience, would bring much-needed insight, intelligence, and judgment to a Board that has often been criticized for favoring Wall Street over Main Street and for ignoring the realities of certain sectors of the economy.

Further, it is incorrect to assert that industry ties or geographic diversity are necessary qualifications for a Board Governor. Indeed, arguments have been made that such industry ties have caused some of the missteps and oversights by the Board in recent years. Perhaps if more Governors were closer to consumer groups and community banks, and better understood the range of experiences in this nation, then the regulatory and supervisory failures causing the Great Recession could have been avoided. Indeed, in the lead up to the crisis, research conducted by some of the nation's most revered organizations demonstrated the nation would suffer a prolific foreclosure crisis. Based on this research, these organizations repeatedly requested that the Federal Reserve, including in meetings with two different Fed Chairs, use its authority under the Home Owners Equity Protection Act to restrict predatory, abusive, and discriminatory lending practices in order to prevent an epic crisis. The Federal Reserve Board ignored the research and information provided by civil rights and other groups, and the nation suffered a horrific crisis from which some communities are still trying to recover.

Finally, while geographic diversity can be helpful, it has never been a critical requirement, especially given that the Reserve Bank Presidents who serve on the Federal Open Market Committee are chosen in specific rotations designed to reflect geographic diversity (see chart below from the Board's website).

Federal Reserve Bank Rotation on the FOMC

Committee membership changes at the first regularly scheduled meeting of the year.

	2023	2024	2025
Members	New York	New York	New York
	Chicago	Cleveland	Chicago
	Philadelphia	Richmond	Boston
	Dallas	Atlanta	St. Louis
	Minneapolis	San Francisco	Kansas City

These criticisms may reflect a lack of understanding of the broad functions of the Board, which go well beyond monetary policy. The Board's dual mission of ensuring maximum employment and price stability, is accomplished through its five general functions. As stated on the Board's website:

About the Federal Reserve System

The Federal Reserve System is the central bank of the United States.

It performs five general functions to promote the effective operation of the U.S. economy and, more generally, the public interest. The Federal Reserve

- **conducts the nation's monetary policy** to promote maximum employment, stable prices, and moderate long-term interest rates in the U.S. economy;
- **promotes the stability of the financial system** and seeks to minimize and contain systemic risks through active monitoring and engagement in the U.S. and abroad;
- **promotes the safety and soundness of individual financial institutions** and monitors their impact on the financial system as a whole;
- **fosters payment and settlement system safety and efficiency** through services to the banking industry and the U.S. government that facilitate U.S.-dollar transactions and payments; and
- **promotes consumer protection and community development** through consumer-focused supervision and examination, research and analysis of emerging consumer issues and trends, community economic development activities, and the administration of consumer laws and regulations.

In addition, the Board has a very influential presence as a thought leader in addressing the economic challenges of our time. For example, Board Governors have recently used their platforms to address challenges relating to crypto currencies and whether there is a role for the central bank to play in establishing a Central Bank Digital Currency. However, the Board has done very little to concretely address the challenges and obstacles to economic equity despite its huge impact on the macroeconomy.

It is well past time for the Board to show leadership in addressing one of the greatest economic challenges of our day and to marshal its vast resources and tools to create an economy that benefits the entire nation, including communities of color. Research shows that, due to bias in the markets, the economy suffered a loss of $16 trillion dollars over the past 20 years and that eliminating racial inequity can generate $5 trillion dollars to the U.S. GDP over a five-year period.

We believe it is imperative to confirm Dr. Lisa Cook to bring innovative solutions to the Board as it grapples with ensuring a full recovery that benefits all segments of our society—including rural communities and small cities—and drives future economic growth. For these reasons, we urge you to promptly confirm Dr. Cook as a Board Governor. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Nikitra Bailey, Senior Vice President of Public Policy at the National Fair Housing Alliance: NBailey@nationalfairhousing.org.

Sincerely,

Individuals

Dr. DeForest B. Soaries, Jr.
Paul Carden
Angela J. Couseillant, P.A.
Latonia Donaldson
Stephanie Ferris
Bill Flagg
Dr. Darrick Hamilton
Dr. Michelle Holder
Jayati Jenkins
Lea Lagueux
Dr. Rakeen Mabud
Bruce E. McDonald
Janet Palacio
Barbara S. Potts
Victoria Silvano
Chris Spaulding
Stephen T. Webb

Local and State Organizations

State	City	Organization
AL	Birmingham	Fair Housing Center of Northern Alabama
AZ	Scottsdale	RE/MAX Excalibur
AZ	Tucson	Southwest Fair Housing Council
CA	Napa	Greater Napa Valley Fair Housing Center
CA	North Hollywood	Summit Realty
CA	Riverside	Fair Housing Council of Riverside County, Inc.
CA	San Francisco	California Reinvestment Coalition
CA	San Rafael	Fair Housing Advocates of Northern California
CA	Santa Ana	Fair Housing Council of Orange County
CA	South San Francisco	Housing Equality Law Project (HELP)
CO	Denver	AREAA, Greater Denver
CT	Hartford	Connecticut Fair Housing Center
FL	Lantana	Fair Housing Center of the Greater Palm Beaches
FL	Miami	Housing Opportunities Project for Excellence, Inc.
GA	Atlanta	Metro Fair Housing Services, Inc.
GA	Savannah	Savannah-Chatham County Fair Housing Council, Inc.
HI	Makawao	AREAA Aloha Chapter
ID	Boise	Intermountain Fair Housing Council, Inc.

IL	Chicago	Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance
LA	New Orleans	Louisiana Fair Housing Action Center
MA	Holyoke	Massachusetts Fair Housing Center, Inc.
MD	Baltimore	Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition
MD	Clarksville	AREAA DC Metro Chapter
MI	Grand Rapids	Fair Housing Center of West Michigan
MI	Kalamazoo	Fair Housing Center of Southwest Michigan
MI	Shelby Township	Mayo Real Estate Group
MN	St Paul	MICAH (Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing)
NY	Bohemia	Long Island Housing Services, Inc.
NY	Long Island City	Fair Housing Justice Center
NY	New York	Center for New York City Neighborhoods, Inc.
OH	Akron	Fair Housing Advocates Association
OH	Cleveland	Housing Research & Advocacy Center dba Fair Housing Center for Rights & Research
OH	Cleveland Heights	Heights Community Congress
OH	Dayton	Miami Valley Fair Housing Center, Inc.
OH	Toledo	The Fair Housing Center
OR	Portland	Vela Projects LLC
PA	Philadelphia	Fair Housing Rights Center in Southeastern Pennsylvania
PR	San Jaun	Solo Por Hoy, Inc.
TX	Dallas	North Texas Fair Housing Center
VA	Richmond	Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia
WA	Tacoma	Fair Housing Center of Washington

National Organizations

Americans for Democratic Action (ADA)
Americans for Financial Reform
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO
Asian Real Estate Association of America
Black Economic Alliance
Center for Disability Rights
Center for Responsible Lending
Centered International Realty Corp
Coldwell Banker Realty
Color Of Change
Consumer Federation of America
Ellington Alliance of Keller Williams Realty

FairPlay
Gilchrest Group LLC
Global Realty Resource Corp.
Integrated Community Solutions, Inc.
Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
Liberation in a Generation
NAACP
NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF)
National Action Network
National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals (NAHREP)
National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB)
National Baptist Convention Housing Commission
National CAPACD
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Coalition For The Homeless
National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC)
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA)
National Fair Housing Alliance
National Housing Resource Center
National Institute of Minority Economic Development
National Low Income Housing Coalition
National Urban League
Opportunity Finance Network
PolicyLink
Revolving Door Project
The Equal Rights Center
The International Group at RE/MAX Professionals
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
UnidosUS
Woodstock Institute