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FJP Statement on Attorney General Announcement and Current Events in D.C.

[Fair and Just Prosecution](#) Executive Director Miriam Krinsky issued the following statement today in response to the news that President-elect Joe Biden would nominate Merrick Garland as his Attorney General and the events unfolding at the Capitol in Washington, D.C.:

“Today’s news that Merrick Garland will be tapped by the Biden-Harris Administration to be the next Attorney General of the United States is a welcome development after four years of failed leadership and an increasingly politicized Department of Justice that abandoned the agency’s North star and mission to seek justice and fairness for all Americans.

We hope that Judge Garland will work to end mass incarceration and that his appointment will usher in an era of a more equitable, compassionate, and evidence-based approach to our federal criminal legal system. We encourage him to look to the [policies and new thinking](#) championed by state and local prosecutors in increasing numbers, including withdrawing pending execution warrants, enhancing police accountability, addressing systemic racism, promoting sentence reductions and compassionate release requests that unwind decades of excessive punishment, treating kids like kids and consistent with brain science, and strongly discouraging federal prosecutors from seeking life without parole sentences. After a year that saw a groundswell of support for reform to our criminal legal system and pleas from millions to address racial injustice, the new administration has a mandate to implement sweeping and enduring change. Judge Garland can lead the way towards this new vision of justice.

We also commend the decision to bring Vanita Gupta back to the Department of Justice as Associate Attorney General. During her tenure as the Head of the Civil Rights Division as well as her inspiring work thereafter at the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, she made clear that she will bring courage, integrity and a deep commitment to justice, all of which are desperately needed to undo the harms perpetrated by the current administration over the past four years.

As someone who spent a decade and a half as a federal prosecutor, and as a proud immigrant to this country, I know well the vital mission of the pursuit of justice and this nation’s past commitment to preserving the integrity of democratic processes. With

deeply disturbing and painful images of some breaching our chambers of leadership and attempting to erode these traditions – and with some at the highest levels of government doing little to stand in the way of these actions – there could never be a more important moment for leadership. Let us hope that 2021 will usher in a new starting point for this nation that embraces justice, racial equity and a government guided by integrity and the best interests of *all* in our diverse communities. We are better than recent events.”

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Fair and Just Prosecution is a national network of elected prosecutors working towards common-sense, compassionate criminal justice reforms. To learn more about FJP's work, visit our [website](#) and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).