

February 20, 2014

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee
437 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
U.S. Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Durbin
U.S. Senate
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse
U.S. Senate
530 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
U.S. Senate
302 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Al Franken
U.S. Senate
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chris Coons
U.S. Senate
127A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
U.S. Senate
724 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mazie Hirono
U.S. Senate
330 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators:

As organizations committed to protecting reproductive and civil rights, racial justice, and equality under the law, we write to voice serious concern about the nomination of Michael Boggs to the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia, and to urge the Senate Judiciary Committee to reject this nomination.

During his time as a legislator in the Georgia General Assembly, Boggs demonstrated a troubling lack of concern for individuals whose experience and personal history differ from his own, creating a record that lacks a demonstrated commitment to fairness and equal justice with respect to issues of reproductive freedom, civil rights, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) equality.

Boggs has devoted portions of his career to opposing women's access to safe, legal reproductive-health services. For example, while serving in the Georgia House of Representatives, Boggs cosponsored legislation that would have created a "Choose Life" license-plate program to

channel funds to anti-choice organizations, including fake clinics that intentionally misinform and mislead women.¹ He also pushed legislation that would have made more severe Georgia's parental-involvement law, which already required parental notice prior to a young woman obtaining abortion care, and was so extreme that it did not include an exception for cases of rape or incest, or an adequate exception to protect a woman's health. Boggs cosponsored legislation that would have required a parent or guardian to accompany in person a young woman seeking abortion care, and display a photo ID, a mean-spirited provision that would impact disproportionately certain groups, predominately the elderly, low-income individuals, and minority communities, who are more likely to lack state-issued photo IDs.²

In addition to his documented hostility toward a woman's constitutional right to choose, Boggs's record on issues of racial justice and LGBT equality also raises grave concern. He voted to keep the Confederate battle emblem—a powerful symbol of oppression and intolerance—on Georgia's state flag over the vocal objection of the state's civil rights community.³ Boggs also voted in support of a measure to amend Georgia's constitution to prohibit marriage for same-sex couples.⁴

We believe that Boggs's record on reproductive rights, civil rights, and LGBT rights is especially troubling in a nominee to the federal bench. Litigants in Georgia, and the nation as a whole, deserve a judge whose commitment to equal justice is clear.

For these reasons, we urge you to oppose the confirmation of Michael Boggs to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

NARAL Pro-Choice America
Advocacy for Action
Advocates for Youth
Black Women's Health Imperative
Color of Change
CREDO Mobile/CREDO Action
Democracy for America
GetEQUAL Action
Human Rights Campaign
MoveOn.org Civic Action

¹ H.B.254, 147th Gen. Assemb., Reg. Sess. (Ga. 2003); H.B.286, 147th Gen. Assemb., Reg. Sess. (Ga. 2003); H.B.630, 147th Gen. Assemb., Reg. Sess. (Ga. 2003).

² H.B.1597, 147th Gen. Assemb., Reg. Sess. (Ga. 2003); H.B.466, 147th Gen. Assemb., Reg. Sess. (Ga. 2004).

³ H.B.16, 146th Gen. Assemb., Reg. Sess. (Ga. 2001).

⁴ S.R.595, 147th Gen. Assemb., Reg. Sess. (Ga. 2004).

Ms. Foundation for Women
National Abortion Federation
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Council of Jewish Women
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Network of Abortion Funds
National Organization for Women
National Partnership for Women and Families
National Women's Health Network
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Progressive Change Campaign Committee
RH Reality Check
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS)
SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective
UltraViolet