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April 14, 2021

The Honorable Rob A. Bonta
Nominee, Attorney General
1300 "I" Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-2919

Dear Attorney General Nominee Bonta,

Congratulations on your nomination by Governor Newsom to serve as California's next Attorney General. Your achievement as the first Filipino American to serve in this position is inspiring to all of us, including the AAPI community, African Americans and people of color statewide. As hate crimes terrorize California's AAPI community and COVID 19 uncovers structural racism in health, education, justice and economic development, your appointment is a welcome beacon of light. I look forward to your confirmation.

I write today to urge you, as your first act as Attorney General, to mount an investigation and study regrading overturning and reversing the effects of Proposition 209. Although the proposition was proposed as a vehicle to end discrimination and to provide equal protection under the law for all, we now have twenty years of evidence that it did just the opposite.

As you know, research studies have established the harm Proposition 209 has caused African Americans in the areas of education¹ and economic development.² African American enrollment in higher education dropped to Jim Crow segregation era levels.³ African American, women and minority business owners lost over \$1 billion a year in potential contract dollars⁴. Personally, what troubles me most is the reality that for the past two decades African American taxpayers have invested in public institutions that do not directly serve their needs. The rapid outmigration of African Americans, dismantling of African American businesses, disenfranchisement of African American workers, and willful neglect of African American learners are only a few of Proposition 209's effects.

¹ [Prop. 209's affirmative action ban drove down Black and Latino UC enrollment and wages, study finds | Center for Studies in Higher Education \(berkeley.edu\)](#)

- [Affirmative Action, Mismatch, and Economic Mobility After California's Proposition 209, by Zachary Bleemer, CSHE 10.20 \(August 2020\) | Center for Studies in Higher Education \(berkeley.edu\)](#)
- [uc-affirmative-action.pdf \(ucop.edu\)](#)

² [Impact of Prop. 209 | Equal Justice Society](#)

- [Marion, Justin. "How Costly Is Affirmative Action? Government Contracting and California's Proposition 209".](#)
- [The Unforeseen Consequences of Prop 209 on African American Architects – Commercial Observer](#)

³ [Black Student Enrollment at UCLA Plunges : NPR](#)

⁴ ["The Impact of Proposition 209 on California's MWBEs"\(PDF\). equaljusticesociety.org. The Equal Justice Society. Retrieved 9 September 2020.](#)

California can no longer accept or afford the damage caused by Proposition 209. As California's next Attorney General, we need you to articulate your views on equal protection under the law, equitable access to public institutions and solutions to end systemic discrimination against African American workers, learners, and businesses.

I look forward to working with you to overturn and reverse the effects of Proposition 209.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike A. Gipson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Mike A. Gipson
Assemblymember, 64th District
Chair, Assembly Democratic Caucus

cc: Governor Newsom
California Legislative Black Caucus
Assembly Special Committee on the Office of Attorney General
Senate Rules Committee