

January 14, 2021

Senator Gary Peters  
Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs  
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Rob Portman  
Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs  
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
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Dear Senator Peters and Senator Portman,

We are a group of eighty-five former senior officials of the United States Department of Justice who have served in administrations of both political parties. We all personally know and/or have worked with Alejandro Mayorkas, President-elect Joe Biden's nominee to serve as Secretary of Homeland Security, during his many years of public service – as a federal prosecutor, as United States Attorney in Los Angeles and as a leader in the Department of Homeland Security during the Obama Administration. We have had ample opportunity to assess Ali's character as he has handled the myriad challenges of government service, and have seen in Ali the unimpeachable integrity, the sound judgment and the commitment to public service that make him an ideal choice to serve in this critical position. For that reason, we wholeheartedly and unequivocally support Ali's nomination, and we urge your Committee and the United States Senate to quickly confirm him as Secretary of Homeland Security so that DHS can have confirmed leadership in place on the first day of the new administration.

Ali has a wealth of experience that uniquely equips him to serve effectively as the DHS Secretary. First he draws on his experience in the Justice Department, and specifically on his role and duty as a federal prosecutor to defend the Constitution and protect individual liberties in the federal criminal justice system. Over the course of twelve years, Ali earned a reputation as one of the finest prosecutors in the federal system, not only for his prosecutorial talent and his tireless efforts to reduce crime and enhance public safety, but also for the integrity and character with which he represented the United States and worked to protect the fairness of the system and the rights of all parties, including those of the accused. He was widely respected by his colleagues in the U.S. Attorney's Office, by the judges on the federal bench, and by the members of the defense bar who knew that they could always trust Ali to keep his word and do the right thing.

That strength of character propelled Ali up the supervisory ranks and earned him a presidential nomination and Senate confirmation as the youngest U.S. Attorney in the country. As U.S. Attorney, Ali quickly became recognized for his leadership and management skills, leading by the day-to-day example of his strong work ethic and using an inclusive and open management

style that raised morale among his colleagues and inspired them to bring some of the most important prosecutions in the country.

Ali also draws upon his experience within DHS and his passion for the homeland security mission. As Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and then Deputy Secretary of the Department over the course of seven years, Ali became expert in the policy areas within the Department's jurisdiction and proved himself as a strong manager and leader. He took on the serious morale issues that still lingered from the reorganization that established the Department, and he succeeded in building a stronger sense of identity within the still evolving organization. He also rolled up his sleeves and made progress in each of the Department's critical program areas, from immigration services to counterterrorism to disaster response. He did that by methodically studying and assessing each of the Department's components, identifying their strengths and weaknesses, and then working hard to equip them with the personnel, leadership, training and resources they needed to better serve their missions. The result of these efforts was a Department that was performing at a demonstrably higher level by the time Ali left government service in 2016.

Besides being a true leader and professional, Ali has a personality that helps him excel in challenging times and environments. With his natural kindness and compassion, his grounded humility, and his openness to the views of others, Ali easily earns friendship and loyalty among people of all different backgrounds and perspectives. As evidence thereof, the signers of this letter all have different views on homeland security policy issues and come from different points on the political spectrum, yet we are solidly united in our affection and respect for Ali and in our strong belief that he will make an exceptional DHS Secretary.

The Department of Homeland Security of today is in dire need of leadership. The proud men and women of DHS need a strong leader, one who is committed to fully supporting them and who has the background and experience to start making a positive impact immediately upon entering the office. They need the type of leadership that has been the trademark of Ali's career in public service – leadership that combines a relentless focus on mission with an inclusive approach to management, a sensitivity to the needs of those affected by DHS operations, and a willingness to listen to others and work with stakeholders across government and the political spectrum. That is the leadership that will help DHS achieve its full potential.

We can think of nobody who is better equipped and prepared than Ali to provide the leadership that is needed at this critical juncture of the Department's history. We therefore urge the Committee and the Senate to promptly confirm him as the next Secretary of Homeland Security.

Sincerely,

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