



April 18, 2018

The Honorable Bill Cassidy
United States Senate
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Kennedy
United States Senate
383 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Cassidy and Kennedy:

On behalf of the students and educators of the great state of Louisiana, we urge you to call for the withdrawal of the nomination of Wendy Vitter to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

During her confirmation hearing, Ms. Vitter was asked if *Brown v. Board of Education* was rightly decided, and she refused to answer. She testified only that she would put aside her own “personal, political or religious views [about segregation]” and follow *Brown* because it is binding precedent. Such testimony alone is disqualifying.

The United States Supreme Court’s unanimous decision in *Brown* was a watershed moment in our nation’s history and in the history of our schools. The words of the *Brown* decision ring as true today as they did in 1954:

Today, education is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments ... [I]t is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms.

Before *Brown*, Jim Crow, *de jure* racial segregation, and racially segregated and unequal schools were the norm and considered constitutional. The Supreme Court’s decision in *Brown* helped our nation turn the corner on that shameful history.

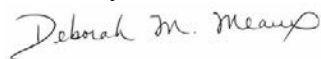
Other recent nominees, including Chief Justice Roberts, Justice Kagan, and Justice Gorsuch, have had no trouble praising the *Brown* decision and do not believe it is inappropriate for them to do so. When Chief Justice Roberts was asked during his confirmation hearing whether he

thought *Brown* was rightly decided, he unequivocally responded, “I do.” Justice Gorsuch described *Brown* as a “great and important decision.” Justice Kagan testified, “I hope and I know that the principles that *Brown v. Board of Education* set forth are still relevant today ... [T]he idea of equality under law is a fundamental American constitutional value.”

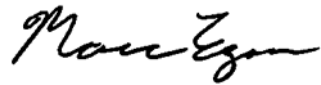
Engraved on the front of the United State Supreme Court building are four simple words that are the bedrock of our system: “Equal justice under law.” A nominee to the federal bench who will not pledge fidelity to those words cannot be confirmed.

On behalf of Louisiana’s students and educators, we urge you to call for the withdrawal of Wendy Vitter’s nomination.

Sincerely,



Deborah Meaux
President
Louisiana Association of Educators



Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association