

Accountable.US Case Study: The Nomination of Vanita Gupta

Summary: Vanita Gupta’s nomination to serve as Associate Attorney General at the Justice Department was marred by right-wing smears, though she was confirmed in April 2021 after being nominated in January 2021. At the time of her nomination to the Department of Justice, Gupta was celebrated as a qualified legal figure with support from law enforcement groups and a long career of fighting for civil rights.

Despite having considerable bipartisan support for her nomination by former DOJ officials and law enforcement, the conservative Judicial Crisis Network (JCN) launched a six-figure smear campaign against her nomination. Funded by the same dark money forces who backed the confirmations of Supreme Court justices Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett, Judicial Crisis Network attacked Gupta as an enemy of law enforcement and as an ally of criminals. They also smeared her record of support for LGBTQ rights.

In addition to the coordinated attacks from JCN, Fox News host Laura Ingram criticized Gupta’s role in expanding safe voting methods during the COVID-19 pandemic and tried to tie Gupta to Mexican cartels. These attacks were picked up across right-wing media.

During Gupta’s Senate hearings, Republicans repeated the attacks fueled by Judicial Crisis Network in an attempt to undermine Gupta as a so-called radical leftist. Republican committee members repeated JCN’s claims that Gupta was anti-police and soft on crime. While their attacks did not block or radically slow down her confirmation, Republican Senators demonstrated that they were willing to parrot the claims of right-wing dark money groups to oppose Biden Administration nominees.

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NOMINATION TIMELINE

Gupta's Nomination Process Was Comparable To The Average Nomination Time For A Biden Department Of Justice's Nominee In Biden's First Year In Office

Status	Date Of Nomination	Hearing Date	Floor Vote/Confirmation Date	Days From Nomination To Hearing	Days From Hearing To Confirmation	Days From Nomination To Confirmation
Confirmed	1/20/21	3/9/21	4/21/21	48	43	91
DOJ Average (As Of 1/14/22)				43.2142	68.3125	92.6875
DIFFERENCE				Received a hearing 4 days later than average for DOJ nominees	Confirmation took 25 days shorter than average for DOJ nominees	Confirmation took 1 day shorter than average for DOJ nominees

INITIAL MEDIA REACTION

Coverage Following Gupta's Nomination Announcement Focused On Her Background In Civil Rights, Her Opposition To The Trump Administration, And The Bipartisan Support Behind Her

Associated Press: Gupta Has "Significance Experience In Civil Rights." "Though Garland is white, the selection of Gupta and Clarke, two women with significant experience in civil rights, appeared designed to blunt any concerns and served as a signal that progressive causes would be prioritized in the new administration. Gupta is the daughter of immigrants from India and Clarke's parents are from Jamaica." [Associated Press, [1/07/21](#)]

The Guardian: Gupta Was "One Of The Leading Figures Pushing Back On The Trump Administration." "Gupta took a job as the head of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition of civil rights groups across the country, where she became one of the leading figures pushing back on the Trump administration." [The Guardian, [2/03/21](#)]

ABC News: As Of March 2021, Gupta Was Biden's Wealthiest Nominee That Had Released A Financial Disclosure Form. "With assets worth tens of millions of dollars, associate attorney general nominee Vanita Gupta is thus far the Biden administration's wealthiest political nominee that has publicly released a financial disclosure form. The disclosure of Gupta's financial interests comes as she faces a potentially rocky confirmation hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee in the coming week." [ABC News, [3/07/21](#)]

New York Times: Gupta Received Bipartisan Support From Former Department Officials And Law Enforcement Groups. "While both nominees have submitted letters of support from a broad, bipartisan coalition of former department officials and law enforcement groups, some Republicans have already signaled that they will oppose Ms. Gupta. Senator Mike Lee of Utah said on Twitter last month that she had taken "dangerous, radical positions," an assertion that police and sheriffs groups have blunted." [New York Times, [3/08/21](#)]

Associated Press: More Than 75 Ex US Attorneys Endorsed Gupta's Nomination. "More than 75 former U.S. attorneys are throwing their support behind President Joe Biden's nominee for associate attorney general and urging congressional leaders to quickly confirm her to the post. Vanita Gupta has been nominated for the No. 3 position in the Justice Department, a position in which she would be responsible for overseeing the department's civil, antitrust and civil rights litigation, but also for helping to implement policy decisions on a host of nationwide issues. She was in charge of the Justice Department's civil rights division in the Obama administration." [Associated Press, [3/02/21](#)]

HuffPost: Policing Leaders Praise DOJ Nominee Vanita Gupta. One Group Is Smearing Her Anyway. "President [Joe Biden](#)'s nominee for the No. 3 position at the Department of Justice is coming under attack from a right-wing group trying to smear her as anti-law enforcement. But a number of conservatives and law enforcement organizations have enthusiastically endorsed her nomination, and even the nation's largest police union — which twice endorsed former President [Donald Trump](#) — praised her as someone they looked forward to working with, saying she could "find common ground even when that seemed impossible." [HuffPost, [2/19/21](#)]

Washington Monthly: Gupta Has Spent Her "Entire Career" "Fighting For Civil Rights." "Vanita Gupta has been nominated to be Associate Attorney General. From 2014-2017, she served as acting director of DOJ's Civil Rights Division. I profiled Gupta during that time. She currently serves as President and CEO of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. [...] These three choices tell us a lot about Biden's priorities for the Department of Justice. While all three women have demonstrated competence and experience, two of them have dedicated their entire careers to fighting for civil rights." [Washington Monthly, [1/20/20](#)]

Protocol: **“She Got Into The Weeds’: Biden’s Associate AG Pick Is A Top Tech Watchdog.”** “On Thursday, buried under the news rubble of Wednesday’s siege, President-elect Biden nominated Vanita Gupta to be associate attorney general of the United States. While Gupta is best known as the former head of the Justice Department’s civil rights unit under President Obama, over the last few years, as CEO of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, Gupta has often sat shoulder-to-shoulder with tech leaders including Mark Zuckerberg and Sheryl Sandberg, urging them to think through some of the most challenging content moderation dilemmas they face and pushing them to do more to stop online chatter from spilling over into offline harm.” [Protocol, [1/08/21](#)]

RIGHT-WING ATTACKS ON GUPTA

Judicial Crisis Network Lead The Charge Against Gupta, Launching An \$800,00 Ad Campaign Against Her Which Accused Her Of Possessing Anti-Law Enforcement/Soft-On-Crime Politics And A Product Of Liberal Dark Money

Judicial Crisis Network, Heritage Action For America, And Americans For Public Trust Launched An Ad Campaign To Tank Gupta’s Nomination

Judicial Crisis Network, Heritage Action For America, And Americans For Public Trust Launched An Ad Campaign To Tank Vanita Gupta’s Nomination. “The campaign is being led by the advocacy groups Judicial Crisis Network, Heritage Action for America, and Americans for Public Trust. And it’s being modeled after the effort the groups spearheaded to galvanize support for Donald Trump’s three Supreme Court justice nominees in the weeks leading up to their respective confirmation hearings. This time, however, the trio is going negative, hoping to torpedo the confirmations of Vanita Gupta, Biden’s nominee for associate attorney general, and Xavier Becerra, the Democratic attorney general of California and nominee for secretary of Health and Human Services.” [Politico, [2/18/21](#)]

Judicial Crisis Network Launched Numerous Attacks Against Gupta In An Attempt To Sink Her Nomination That Characterized Her As Soft On Crime And Anti-Law Enforcement

Judicial Crisis Network Launched An \$800,000 Ad Buy Targeting Gupta, Attacking Her For Supporting The Defund The Police Movement, Demanding The Release Of Prisoners During The COVID-19 Pandemic, And Wanting To “Reduce Punishments” On White Supremacists And Terrorists. “Two other ads attack Becerra and Gupta’s progressive policies. One \$800,000 ad paid for by the Judicial Crisis Network titled “Dangerous Appointee” shows images of violence this summer in cities across America and states where murder rates are on the rise. “Biden appoints Vanita Gupta for a top job in the Justice Department,” the ad says. “She supports defunding the police, led a group that wants to reduce punishments on white supremacists, even terrorists. When our cities burned Gupta could’ve stood for law and order, for victims. Instead she advocated to let convicts out of jail.” [Politico, [2/18/21](#)], [YouTube, [2/18/21](#)]

- **Media Matters: All Of JCN’s Claims Against Gupta Are “Wildly Misleading.”** “Against a backdrop of crime scenes, guns, and protests, the JCN ad, titled “Dangerous Appointee,” lobes a series of negative claims against Gupta, the former president and CEO of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. Warning that she “supports defunding the police” and “led a group that wants to reduce punishments on white supremacists, even terrorists,” the ad states: “When our cities burned, Gupta could’ve stood for law and order -- for victims. Instead, she advocated to let convicts out of jail.” All three claims are wildly misleading.” [Media Matters, [2/19/21](#)]

- **Fox News Posted An Article Highlighting Judicial Crisis Network And Heritage Foundation Critiques Of Gupta.** “Judicial Crisis Network (JCN) and Heritage Action for America are set to spend well over \$1 million on ads excoriating Vanita Gupta and Xavier Becerra as too far left to be confirmed by the Senate. Politico first reported on the effort. Gupta, who in recent years has led the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, was selected to be the associate attorney general, the third-highest position in the Justice Department. Becerra, the current attorney general of California, is nominated to be the secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services.” [Fox News, [2/28/21](#)]

Carrie Severino, Head Of Judicial Crisis Network: Gupta Wants To Defund The Police. “So it’s a major problem that Vanita Gupta wants to defund the police. When talk about defunding law enforcement gained steam last summer, Gupta spoke approvingly of the “local conversations about budgets” that were then taking place in Minneapolis and “all over the country.” [Fox News. [2/22/21](#)]

Carrie Severino, Head Of Judicial Crisis Network: Gupta Has Opposed Laws To Combat Violent Crime Supported By Parents Of Victims. “Gupta Has Also Shamefully Criticized Efforts By Parents Of Violent Crime Victims To Strengthen Criminal Laws, Calling Them ‘Lawmaking By Anecdote’” [Fox News. [2/22/21](#)]

Judicial Crisis Network Attacked Gupta As An Enemy Of The “Faith Community” For Supporting LGBTQ And Reproductive Rights

Carrie Severino, Head Of Judicial Crisis Network: Gupta Criticized The Supreme Court Decision Allowing Businesses To Discriminate Against LGBTQ Persons And Opposed Exceptions To The ACA Contraceptive Mandate—Which Should Alarm “The Faith Community.” “In 2017, Gupta was critical of the position that came to be the Supreme Court’s holding in Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission, i.e., that a Christian baker could not be required to design and create a wedding cake for a same-sex marriage as a public accommodation. After the court ruled in favor of the Little Sisters of the Poor last year, permitting them an exemption to the Affordable Care Act’s contraceptive mandate violating their religious beliefs, Gupta called it a “troubling decision.” Given that Gupta will oversee DOJ civil rights policy and enforcement if she is confirmed, the faith community should be alarmed.” [Fox News. [2/22/21](#)]

Carrie Severino, Head Of Judicial Crisis Network: Gupta Supported Using Tax Dollars To Fund The Transition Of Trans Inmates And Supports Allowing Trans Female Athletes Compete In Girls’ Sports In School. “As the chief civil rights prosecutor at the Justice Department during the Obama administration, Gupta argued that prisons should be forced to use taxpayer dollars to pay for hormone treatments for transgender inmates. Last year, she asserted that transgender student athletes who identify as female must be allowed to compete in girls’ sports in school.” [Fox News. [2/22/21](#)]

Judicial Crisis Network Attacked Gupta As A Product Of Liberal Dark Money Interests

Carrie Severino, Head Of Judicial Crisis Network: Gupta’s Beliefs Are Influenced By Liberal Dark Money Interests. “After serving as the head of the Civil Rights Division in President Obama’s DOJ, Gupta became president and CEO of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, which has received funding from Arabella Advisors’ Sixteen Thirty Fund. Gupta also ran the Leadership Conference Education Fund, which received over \$1 million from Arabella’s New Venture Fund. [...] Gupta, who was a leading voice of opposition to Amy Coney Barrett’s nomination to the Supreme Court, responded that “nothing is off the table.” It’s no wonder that Demand Justice (also funded by Arabella) named Gupta to its suggested list of Supreme Court nominees last year.” [Fox News. [2/22/21](#)]

After Judicial Crisis Network’s Ad Buy, Fox News And Other Conservative Media Continued To Hammer Gupta For Her Work In Voting Rights And Her Private Stock Portfolio

Laura Ingraham Attacked Gupta For Meeting With Tech Companies To Crack Down On Disinformation And Supporting Universal Mail In Ballots

Laura Ingraham: Gupta Supports Getting Rid Of All Law Endorsement And His Hypocritical For Supporting Public Safety Measures In DC Following January 6th. “In other words, no law enforcement. The response that we are seeing on the streets right now is not proportionate. It is not safe, it is a demonstration of military force that is so beyond what is happening on the street’: But apparently she loves the military response right now in D.C. ,where there is no threat. But will she at least use this to protect the First Amendment?” [The Ingraham Angle, [2/18/21](#)]

Laura Ingraham Criticized Gupta For Supporting Universal Mail In Ballots. “We need expanded vote by mail with things like prepaid postage stamps, you saw the attacks on the U.S. Postal service that were causing delays. Suspending online voter legislation. We need to be fighting disinformation. ‘ Was there any doubt in your mind that they will use these concerns to push for universal mail-in ballots as a federal issue?” [The Ingraham Angle, [2/18/21](#)]

Laura Ingraham Criticized Gupta For Working With Tech Companies To Crack Down On Disinformation. “She personally met with the CEO of Facebook and Twitter out of the election to convince them to crack down on so-called disinformation. That move led to the banning of speech that was deemed harmful. But perhaps most revealing of miss Gupta is this exchange from last summer.” [The Ingraham Angle, [2/18/21](#)]

Fox News & Fox Business Claimed That Gupta Owned Stock In A Company That Fuels Mexican Cartels’ Heroin Production And Pays Mexican Workers Low Wages

Fox Business: “Biden DOJ Nominee Gupta Owns Millions In Stock Of Company Accused Of Fueling Mexican Cartels’ Heroin Production” [Fox News, [3/10/21](#)]

Fox Business: “DOJ nominee Vanita Gupta Is Investor In Family Business That Pays Mexicans Less Than \$1.50 An Hour.” [Fox News, [3/17/21](#)]

Fox News: “Top Biden DOJ Nominee Wants To Shrink Legal System ‘Footprint’ In ‘Black And Brown People’s Lives.’” [Fox News, [1/07/21](#)]

Washington Times Repeated Claims Made By Judicial Crisis Network Against Gupta

Washington Times: Gupta Will Use Her Position To “Push A Liberal, Dark Money Fueled Agenda” Because Of Her Ties To Arabella Advisors. “In the middle of this pandemic, we need someone with real experience, not the support of left-wing money. Mr. Becerra is the wrong nominee and should be rejected. In much the same boat, Vanita Gupta will leverage her position to push a liberal, dark money-fueled agenda. Before her nomination, Ms. Gupta was CEO and president of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and the Leadership Conference Education Fund, which received more than \$1 million from groups affiliated with the shadowy leftist group Arabella Advisors.” [Washington Times, [2/23/21](#)]

Washington Times: Gupta “Implicitly Endorsed The Main Tenets Of The Defund The Police Movement.” “Ms. Gupta has implicitly endorsed the main tenets of the defund-the-police movement. In 2020, she told a group of left-wing dark money donors, “[L]ocalities have been overspending on criminal justice system infrastructure and policing and divesting in housing, education, jobs, and health care. Some people call it ‘defunding’ the police, other people call it ‘divest/invest’.” [Washington Times, [2/23/21](#)]

Washington Times: Gupta Supported A “Massive Expansion Of Federal Government Powers At The Expense Of State And Local Police Forces.” “Instead of adequately funding local police forces, Ms. Gupta wants a massive expansion of federal government powers at the expense of state and local police forces. As former attorney general of Nevada, I can confidently say that federalizing law enforcement is exactly the opposite of what is needed right now.” [Washington Times, [2/23/21](#)]

RIGHT-WING FUNDING BEHIND ATTACKS

The Judicial Crisis Network Is The Public Face Of A Network Of Nonprofits Overseen By Right-Wing Operative Leonard Leo To Promote A Conservative Judiciary

Leonard Leo Is "The Maestro Of A Network Of Interlocking Nonprofits" To Push Conservative Judges

Leo Has Been "Widely Known As A Confidant To Trump" And "The Maestro Of A Network Of Interlocking Nonprofits" To Support Conservative Judges. "He is widely known as a confidant to Trump and as executive vice president of the Federalist Society, an influential nonprofit organization for conservative and libertarian lawyers that has close ties to Supreme Court justices. But behind the scenes, Leo is the maestro of a network of interlocking nonprofits working on media campaigns and other initiatives to sway lawmakers by generating public support for conservative judges." [The Washington Post, [05/21/19](#)]

Leo Was One Of Trump's "Most Important Outside Advisors." "One of President Donald Trump's most important outside advisors assured a group of top Koch network donors over the weekend that the nomination of Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court is just the beginning of an even bigger effort to load up the federal judiciary with conservative judges. This affirmation from the Federalist Society's Leonard Leo, who advised Trump on the Kavanaugh nomination, shows that while the president has been in a war of words with the organization led by billionaire industrialists Charles and David Koch, the administration and the group still have major goals in common – particularly when it comes to the courts." [CNBC, [08/02/18](#)]

The New Yorker: Leo Is Not A Politician, Public Figure, Nor Legal Scholar But He “Has Met And Cultivated Almost Every Important Republican Lawyer In More Than A Generation.” [New Yorker, [4/17/17](#)]

Conservative Group Judicial Crisis Network Was The “Public Face” Of Leo’s Dark Money Network Spending Millions To Confirm Conservative Supreme Court Picks

The Judicial Crisis Network Emerged From A Dinner Party Leonard Leo Attended With Neil Corkery And Late Justice Antonin Scalia And Was Created To Ensure George W. Bush Nominated The Preferred SCOTUS Candidates Of Leo’s Network. “After the 2004 election, the Judicial Crisis Network (JCN) was conceived at a small dinner party Leo attended with Neil Corkery and others. Justice Antonin Scalia was a guest. Launched as the Judicial Confirmation Network, it was created in anticipation of the Supreme Court vacancies that George W. Bush ultimately filled with Justices John Roberts and Samuel Alito.” [Senate Judiciary Hearing Testimony, [3/10/21](#)]

Judicial Crisis Network Is the "Public" Face Of A Secretive Network Of Dark Money Groups Spending Millions to Confirm Conservative Supreme Court Picks. “Judicial Crisis Network, a ‘dark money’ group that operates as the preeminent vehicle for deep-pocketed donors to funnel millions of dollars to support or oppose judicial nominees in Supreme Court confirmation fights, has served as the public face of the network while a web of secretive groups operate behind the scenes.” [Open Secrets, [1/2/20](#)]

- **The Judicial Crisis Network/Concord Fund Is The Sister 501(c)(4) Of 501(c)(3) Group The 85 Fund (FKA The Judicial Education Project.)** “New tax returns reviewed by CRP reveal that Judicial Education Project, JCN’s sister 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, also paid an additional \$1.3 million to BH Group LLC last year. Judicial Education Fund keeps its donors anonymous but CRP tracked the bulk of the group’s recent funding to DonorsTrust, which accounted for more than 99 percent of its money last year. Like JCN, the Judicial Education Fund has also been funded by Wellspring in prior years. A public records request revealed that Leo and another Federalist Society vice president have also been involved in a nonprofit called the BH Fund.” [Open Secrets, [11/28/18](#)]

As Of 2015, Judicial Crisis Network Had “No Employees Or Volunteers” And “Almost All Of Its Money” Came From Two Donors, Both Of Whom Were Undisclosed. “This form shows that the Judicial Crisis Network lists that it has no employees or volunteers. In a document provided at the request of The New York Times, it also shows that almost all of its money—or perhaps all of it—came from just two donors, which the group declined to name. Federal law does not require non profits to disclose the names of their donors. Neil Corkery is listed as the treasurer of the Judicial Crisis Network.” [Fair Fight, accessed [02/25/22](#)]

Judicial Crisis Network Is Connected to The DeVos Family

Judicial Crisis Network President Carrie Severino’s Husband Roger Severino Was Director Of DeVos Center for Religion and Civil Society at The Heritage Foundation And A Senior Fellow At The Ethics And Public Policy Center. [Heritage Foundation, Accessed [2/23/22](#)]

Carrie Severino’s Father Mark Campbell And Daniel DeVos Were Business Partners. [Grand Rapids Business Journal, [1/27/08](#)]

The DeVos Family Are Republican Megadonors. “Since 1989, Betsy DeVos and her relatives have given at least \$20.2 million to Republican candidates, party committees, PACs and super PACs, according to an OpenSecrets.org analysis. Amway, the multilevel marketing giant now known as Alticor that earned much of the family its wealth, gave another nearly \$3.6 million to the party prior to 2002. And that’s just at the federal level — family members have given hundreds of millions more to state and local level politics and to nonprofit groups, think tanks and media outlets championing their favored conservative causes.” [OpenSecrets, [12/1/16](#)]

Betsy DeVos Was Trump’s Education Secretary Who Spent Years Disparaging Public Education As She Championed Charter And Private Schools. “For the cause she most often championed, that of expanding families’ access to charter and private schools, she made little progress — and may have been counterproductive, scaring away sympathetic Democrats who didn’t dare align with one of their party’s favorite villains. Perhaps her most remarkable achievement wasn’t in the realm of policy at all, but in the fact that she became a household name — as a Cabinet secretary — and brought a white-hot spotlight to the debate about how America should educate its children. “I don’t think there is another secretary of education who is better known than her throughout our history,” the NEA’s Pringle says.” [NPR, [11/19/20](#)]

Judicial Crisis Network Is Closely Connected To The 45 Committee, A Pro-Trump Group Set Up By The Right-Wing Megadonor Ricketts Family


The Ricketts Family, Which Includes Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts, Has Been One Of The Most Powerful Right-Wing Megadonors In America. “Pete Ricketts, the governor of Nebraska and scion of one of the most powerful megadonor families in the Republican Party, had a pressing request for Donald Trump: Please stay out of my home-state politics.” [Politico, [11/02/21](#)]

Todd Ricketts Founded The 45 Committee To Funnel Anonymous Donors’ Money To The Trump Campaign. “Todd Ricketts, whose family owns the Chicago Cubs, has raised \$30 million for a pair of pro-Trump groups and has discussed a \$70 million goal before Election Day, according to three Republican fundraisers familiar with the effort [...] The group, which is called 45Committee, is registered under a section of


the tax code — 501(c)(4) — that allows tax-exempt groups to accept contributions of unlimited sizes that can be used to air political and issue-based ads without disclosing their donors’ names. Ricketts also has assumed control of a linked super PAC called Future45 that is required to disclose its donors.” [Politico, [9/28/16](#)]

The 45 Committee Received \$1 Million From The Judicial Crisis Network And Wellspring Committee From 2015-2016. [IRS Form 990, 2016, Accessed [2/23/22](#)]

Public Records Suggest That Judicial Crisis Network And 45Committee May Coordinate Their Ad Buys. There are dozens of instances in which JCN and 45Committee purchased issue ads on the same networks in the same markets within days of one another, using the same advertising firm, Mentzer Media.

	REMIT TO Sinclair Broadcast (c/o WPEC PO Box 206270 Dallas, TX 75320-6270	Advertiser Agency Buyer Salesperson	Judicial Crisis Network (74960) Mentzer Media Services (1381) RAMBO,ALLY TeleRep/DC, Washington DC (2995) ph: (703) 528-7800	Invoice 4870005 Inv Date 11/27/2016 Terms CIA Contract 2693134 Bill Type Standard Period 10/31/2016 - 11/27/2016
	Mentzer Media Services 210 W Pennsylvania Suite 250 Towson, MD 21204 AgM	Product Brand Acct Types Est/Headline Demo Revision Comments	POLITICAL ISSUE (ns) (1187) JUDICIAL CRISIS NTWK (878250) National/Political Issue Agency BRD 4423/08447213 A35+R JUDICIAL CRISIS NTWK	CO-OP/Order Type No/Normal Package Gen. Date 11/29/2016 12:39:01PM

West Palm Beach (WPEC) **OFFICIAL BILLING INVOICE**

	REMIT TO Sinclair Broadcast (c/o WPEC PO Box 206270 Dallas, TX 75320-6270	Advertiser Agency Buyer Salesperson	45 Committee (112878) Mentzer Media Services (1381) GEPNER,CAT TeleRep/DC, Washington DC (2995) ph: (703) 528-7800	Invoice 4868559 Inv Date 11/27/2016 Terms CIA Contract 2681190 Bill Type Standard Period 10/31/2016 - 11/27/2016
	Mentzer Media Services 210 W Pennsylvania Suite 250 Towson, MD 21204 AgM	Product Brand Acct Types Est/Headline Demo Revision Comments	POLITICAL ISSUE (ns) (1187) 45 COMMITTEE N09N15 (875173) National/Political Issue Agency BRD 4372/08434815 A35+R 45 COMMITTEE N09N15	CO-OP/Order Type No/Normal Package Gen. Date 11/29/2016 12:37:42PM

West Palm Beach (WPEC) **OFFICIAL BILLING INVOICE**

Near-identical ad buys from JCN and 45Committee

[Analysis of FCC Public Inspection Files, Last Accessed [2/25/22](#)]

Judicial Crisis Network Coordinated With The 45 Committee And Ricketts Family Through The Group Nebraskans For The Death Penalty. “A report filed Friday shows [Governor Pete Ricketts] gave \$100,000 to Nebraskans for the Death Penalty in early July, which comes on top of the \$100,000 he gave to the campaign in June...The second-largest individual donor is his father, T.D. Ameritrade founder Joe Ricketts, who gave \$100,000 in June. The elder Ricketts did not contribute any additional funds in July. Nebraskans for the Death Penalty got another \$200,000 boost in late July from the Judicial Crisis Network, based in Washington, D.C.” [Omaha World-Herald, [10/16/19](#)]

Former 45 Committee President And Ricketts Family Political Advisor Brian Baker Heads The Group Ending Spending. “Brian Baker, the Ricketts family’s political adviser, who is helping run the 45 groups, declined to comment on the call or the current nature of the relationship between the family and Trump. But Baker said the family always intended to support the GOP nominee — regardless of who it was...The Ricketts family also helms another super PAC and nonprofit group operation, called Ending Spending, that spent \$24 million on ads boosting Republicans or attacking Democrats in congressional races in 2014 and has spent \$3 million so far this cycle.” [Politico, [9/28/16](#)]

- **Ending Spending Gave Judicial Crisis Network \$100,000 In 2016.** [IRS Form 990, 2016, Accessed [2/24/22](#)]

The Washington Times Was Co-Founded By A Man Accused Of Leading A Cult

The Washington Times Was Co-Founded As A Conservative Alternative To The Washington Post By The Leader Of The Unification Church, Which Was Accused Of Being A Cult. “His stated ambition was to rule the world and replace Christianity with his own faith, which blended elements of Christianity, Confucianism and Korean folk religions. A leading symbol of the 1970s cult wars in America, he attracted a great deal of attention and ridicule for holding mass weddings for Unificationist couples whom he had paired, often without the prospective partners ever having met. [...] His most prominent investment was the Washington Times, founded in 1982 as a conservative counterbalance to what Mr. Moon perceived as The Washington Post’s liberal bias.” [Washington Post, [9/02/12](#)]

The Washington Times Is Still Owned By A Company Associated With The Unification Church. “The Washington Times is an online and print news agency based in Washington, D.C. The Washington Times was founded as a print paper by Unification Church founder Sun Myung Moon. Moon first launched the paper in 1982. The paper was under the control of the Unification Church’s News World Communications until 2010, when The Washington Times, LLC, a subsidiary of News World Media Development LLC—also a Unification Church company—took over the paper.” [Ballotpedia, [Accessed 5/12/21](#)]

One America News Network Launched In The Same Building As The Washington Times. “The station, called One America News Network, is slated to announce its launch formally at the Conservative Political Action Conference, the annual gathering of conservatives, in Washington on Thursday. [...] Herring said the company is preparing to pour tens of millions of dollars into the network and hiring for about news positions in a new Washington, D.C., office that will open in the Washington Times building.” [Daily Beast, [7/11/17](#)]

ATTACKS AGAINST GUPTA DURING HEARINGS

Numerous Republican Senators Parroted The Attacks On Gupta That Were Originated By Judicial Crisis Network, Accusing Her Of Being Anti-Police And Racist

Republican Senators Attacked Gupta For Being Soft On Crime Or Anti-Police—Echoing The Claims By Judicial Crisis Network

Sen. John Cornyn (R - TX) Attacked Gupta For Her Support Of Police Reform, Claiming Said She “Has The Potential Of Being The Most Dangerous Nominee To The Department of Justice. “I still am very concerned about Ms. Gupta’s nomination,” Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, said, citing her responses to the committee’s questions. “She has avoided answering questions, or as in the case of her testimony here in front of the committee, she’s completely, 180 degrees -- taken a 180-degree position different from what she has on a previous occasion as recently as last summer when we had her before the committee [to] testify on police reform.” Cornyn accused Gupta of undergoing a “confirmation conversion” and saying what she believes she has to in order to get confirmed. “So I remain very concerned about this nominee, I think she has the potential of being the most dangerous nominee to the Department of Justice” [Fox news, [3/18/21](#)]

- **Carrie Severino, Head Of Judicial Crisis Network: Gupta Wants To Defund The Police.** “So it’s a major problem that Vanita Gupta wants to defund the police. When talk about defunding law enforcement gained steam last summer, Gupta spoke approvingly of the “local conversations about budgets” that were then taking place in Minneapolis and “all over the country.” [Fox News. [2/22/21](#)]

Sen. Cruz (R – TX) Accused Gupta Of Wanting To Defund The Police. “Cruz and other Republicans pointed to Gupta’s testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee as an advocate last year, in which she said she supported reallocating resources so there were alternatives to law enforcement handling issues like mental health problems. Cruz argued her comments amounted to support of defunding the police.” [CNN. [3/09/21](#)]

Sen Grassley (R – IA) Tried To Force A Second Hearing For Gupta Over Concerns His Party Had About Her Desire To End Qualified Immunity, The Death Penalty, And Her Desire To Defund The Police.

“Senator Charles E. Grassley, the committee’s ranking Republican, expressed a desire from his party members for a second hearing to further question her about legal immunities for police officers, drug decriminalization, defunding the police and the death penalty.” [New York Times, [3/25/21](#)]

Sens. Lee And Cotton Accused Gupta Of Claiming All Republicans Are Racist, Echoing Claims By Judicial Crisis Network

Carrie Severino, Head Of JCN Implied That Gupta Believes All Americans Are Inherently Racist. “When Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, asked Gupta at a 2020 hearing on police reform if she believed “all Americans are racist,” she replied, “I think we all have implicit bias and racial bias.” [Fox News. [2/22/21](#)]

Sen Mike Lee (R – UT) Said Gupta Believed All Republicans Were Racist. “Another testy moment came amid questioning from Sen. Mike Lee of Utah, R-Utah, who quoted statements by two of Judge Garland’s picks for leadership roles at the Justice Department, Vanita Gupta and Kristen Clarke. Lee suggested Gupta had described all Republicans as racist and that Clarke had expressed anti-Semitic views.” [Law360, [2/22/21](#)]

CNN: “Sen. Tom Cotton, An Arkansas Republican, Questioned Gupta's Previous Testimony As An Advocate That Everyone Has Biases, [...] [Asking] Whether Her Organization's Opposition To Several Non-White Trump Judicial Nominees Was Due To Race.” [CNN. [3/09/21](#)]

Sen. Mike Lee (R – UT) Attacked Gupta For Her Past Statements, Without Quoting Any Of Them Specifically, And Compared Them To A Trump Nominee Whose Nomination Was Pulled After Republicans Criticized Him For His History Of Racially Insensitive Remarks. “Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) sparred with Gupta over her past statements, although without publicly reading or describing any specific comment she had made. Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) sparred with Gupta over her past statements, although without publicly reading or describing any specific comment she had made. He suggested she was asking for forgiveness for her overheated rhetoric while denying such understanding to nominees she opposed as a civil rights advocate, including Ryan Bounds, an Oregon lawyer President Donald Trump nominated to the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in 2017. Trump pulled Bounds’ nomination the following year after Sen. Tim Scott (R-S.C.) joined Democrats in expressing concern about the lawyer’s college writings against “race-thinking groups [which] divide up by race for their feel-good ethnic hoedowns.” [Politico, [3/09/21](#)]

Republican Senators Also Attacked Gupta For Her Supposed Partisanship

Multiple Senators Accused Gupta Of Being An Unrelenting Partisan Who Was Too Biased To Be Qualified For The Department Of Justice—Specifically Citing Past Tweets Criticizing Republicans

Sen. Ted Cruz (R – TX) Accused Gupta As An “Extreme Partisan Advocate” Of The “Extreme Left” Who Has “Intolerance And Hostility To Anyone Who Disagrees.” “Senator Ted Cruz was perhaps the most combative of the committee members as he described Vanita Gupta as “an extreme partisan advocate.” “As I look at your record on every single issue, the positions you’ve advocated for are on the extreme left,” he said, “and you’ve demonstrated an intolerance for and hostility to anyone who disagrees with the extreme left’s political positions.” [Courthouse News, [3/09/21](#)]

Sen. John Cornyn (R – TX) Claimed Gupta Was Putting On A Moderate Face To Hide Her Extreme Leftist Views . “Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas) said the moderate face Gupta was putting forward at the hearing clashed with what he called her ‘almost unbroken record of partisan culture war that is in your resume.’” [Politico, [3/09/21](#)]

Sens Chuck Grassley (R – IA) And Marsha Blackburn (R – TN) Claimed Gupta Was Too Biased For The Job, Citing Previous Tweets By Gupta Describing The Republican National Convention As “Nights Of Racism, Xenophobia, And Lies.” “For example, Sens. Charles E. Grassley (R-Iowa) and Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.) have criticized Vanita Gupta, Biden’s nominee for associate attorney general, for tweeting her reaction to the 2020 GOP convention: “Don’t know if I can take three more nights of racism, xenophobia, and outrageous lies.” [Washington Post, [3/12/21](#)]

Sen Blackburn (R – TN) Attacked Gupta For A Tweet Criticizing Sen. Susan Collins (R – ME) For Supporting Brett Kavanaugh’s Supreme Court Nomination. “Blackburn and others also take umbrage at Gupta’s tweet admonishing Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine) for “sending a dangerous message” by supporting Brett M. Kavanaugh’s appointment to the Supreme Court after he was accused of sexual assault.” [Washington Post, [3/12/21](#)].

Sen Blackburn (R – TN) Called Gupta A Hypocrite For Calling On The Public To “Believe Survivors” During Brett Kavanaugh’s Hearing But Not Making Similar Statements Related To The Then-Ongoing Investigation Into New York Governor Andrew Cuomo For Sexual Misconduct

Sen Blackburn (R – TN) Called Gupta A Hypocrite For Calling On The Public To “Believe Survivors” During Brett Kavanaugh’s Hearing But Not Making Similar Statements Related To The Then-Ongoing Investigation Into New York Governor Andrew Cuomo For Sexual Misconduct. “Blackburn also noted that during the controversy over sexual assault allegations against Kavanaugh, Gupta said, “Believe survivors.” The senator asked if that applied to the women who have made allegations of sexual harassment or impropriety against Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D-N.Y.) in recent days, but Gupta would not say if she believes those who have leveled claims against Cuomo. “On Gov. Cuomo’s allegations, the investigation by the attorney general is ongoing, and I believe it’s appropriate,” Gupta said. “So, you don’t have an opinion like you had an opinion back in 2018?” Blackburn said. “You’ve been posting about believing women over and over since the #MeToo movement started... To me, it seems a little hypocritical to say the least.” [Politico, [3/09/21](#)]

CONFIRMATION

Vanita Gupta Was Confirmed As Associate Attorney General On April 21, 2021. On April 21, 2021, the Senate confirmed Vanita Gupta as Associate Attorney General by a 51-49 margin. [Congress.gov, [4/21/21](#)]