

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 13, 2022

The Honorable Robert Menendez
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
423 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable James E. Risch
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
423 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch:

As the leadership of the Democratic Women's Caucus, we write to express our full support for the nomination of Dr. Geeta Rao Gupta to serve as the Ambassador at Large for Global Women's Issues at the U.S. Department of State. On November 12, 2021, President Biden announced the nomination of Dr. Gupta to fill this role, which is critical to promoting the rights of women and girls worldwide. If confirmed, Dr. Gupta will be tasked with advancing women's economic empowerment, enhancing their role in political and civil life, and combating violence against women. As the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations considers her nomination, we encourage Dr. Gupta's swift confirmation.

President Biden's decision to nominate Dr. Gupta reflects the Biden-Harris Administration's dedication to advancing international gender equity and equality. In recent years, the coronavirus pandemic and climate-related events have disproportionately impacted women and girls, threatening their economic and social gains. Since the start of the pandemic, gender-based violence, including domestic violence, child marriage, and female genital mutilation, has increased worldwide, contributing to a rise in economic insecurity and social isolation among women.¹ Climate-related events in low and lower middle-income countries have prevented at least four million girls from completing their education.² Furthermore, women around the world remain severely underrepresented at the highest levels of government and are too often omitted from the political decision-making process. With no seat at the table, women are unable to advocate for themselves and their families. These global trends damage all of us – we must strive to empower women so our world is safer and more secure.

For decades, Dr. Gupta has been a leader on women's issues, and her distinguished career demonstrates her ability to handle the most pressing issues impacting women and girls globally. Dr. Gupta serves as a Senior Fellow at the United Nations Foundation and is a Founder and Senior Advisor to the 3D Program for Girls and Women, which aims to improve socioeconomic

¹ <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/in-focus-gender-equality-in-covid-19-response/violence-against-women-during-covid-19>

² <https://malala.org/newsroom/archive/malala-fund-publishes-report-on-climate-change-and-girls-education>

outcomes for women in India. Additionally, she is on the World Health Organization's Independent Oversight and Advisory Committee for health emergencies; Chairs the Advisory Board of WomenLift Health, which works to promote women's leadership in global health; and was a lead author for the Lancet Series on Gender Equality, Norms and Health. Dr. Gupta's background uniquely qualifies her to ensure that the U.S. remains unwavering in its support of women's rights around the globe.

Promoting the rights of women and girls around the world is vital to our national security and economic stability. As the leadership of the Democratic Women's Caucus, we have no doubt that Dr. Gupta will continue to build upon that progress and promote investments in women to advance American leadership globally. Therefore, we strongly urge you to swiftly take up this nomination and move forward with the confirmation process.


Sincerely,



Jackie Speier
Co-Chair
Democratic Women's Caucus



Lois Frankel
Co-Chair
Democratic Women's Caucus



Brenda L. Lawrence
Co-Chair
Democratic Women's Caucus



Veronica Escobar
Vice Chair
Democratic Women's Caucus



Sylvia R. Garcia
Vice Chair
Democratic Women's Caucus