


Chairman Phil Mendelson

A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To appoint Ms. Nkechi Taifa to the District of Columbia Corrections Information Council Governing Board.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “District of Columbia Corrections Information Council Governing Board Nkechi Taifa Appointment Resolution of 2018”.

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia appoints:

Nkechi Taifa
5735 27th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20015
(Ward 4)

as a member of the District of Columbia Corrections Information Council Governing Board, established by section 11201a(b) of the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997, effective October 2, 2010 (D.C. Law 18-233; D.C. Official Code § 24-101.01(b)), to serve for a term ending two years after the effective date of this resolution.

Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia shall transmit a copy of this resolution, upon its adoption, to the appointee, the chairperson of the Board, and to the Office of the Mayor.

Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in the District of Columbia Register.

Nkechi Taifa, Esq.
5735 27th Street NW
Washington, DC 20015
Nkechi.Taifa@opensocietyfoundations.org
(202) 721-5618 office; (202) 641-6605 mobile

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Advocacy Director and Strategic Policy Analyst

- Coordinate federal criminal justice agenda working closely with members of Congress and their staff and key committees on issues that relate to sentencing reform, prison reform, reentry, law enforcement accountability
- Analyze and review, conduct policy analysis and advocacy strategies
- Serve as principal spokesperson on criminal justice reform issues
- Convene Washington-based advocacy coalition advancing criminal justice policy reforms ; liaison with governmental agencies, institutions & others
- Provide technical assistance to members of Congress and their staff, U.S. Sentencing Commission, Mayor, City Council, and other policy makers, including preparation and delivery of testimonies

Academician

- Public interest counselor for law students
- Teach specialized law school seminars
- Develop and coordinate opportunities for law student pro bono activities and public service employment
- Legal research and writing
- Teach high school students in summer law camp

Private Practitioner

- Cases involving adult criminal defense, juvenile court, employment discrimination, landlord & tenant, child abuse and neglect, family law
- Litigation, analyzing & indexing discovery, preparation and examination of expert and lay witnesses for trial, taking and defending depositions, settlement negotiations
- Landmark cases, *Shepherd v. American Broadcasting Companies*, 864 F. Supp. 486 (D.C. Cir. 1994); 62 F.3d 1469 (D.C. Cir. 1995); *U.S. v. Whitehorn*, 710 F. Supp. 803 (1989), *Knop v. Johnson*, 655 F. Supp. 871 (WD Mich 1987)

Manager

- Oversee recruiting, hiring and supervision of staff, research assistants, law clerks and interns, and promote professional development opportunities
- Mentor young professionals who have gone on to work at organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union, Leadership Conference on Civil and

Human Rights, American Constitution Society, Justice Policy Institute, D.C. Public Defender Service, etc.

- Convene and Manager of the Justice Roundtable Coalition
- Manage conceptualization, planning and implementation of events including congressional briefings, lobby days, call-in days, town hall meetings, etc.
- Identify best practices & improvement of internal systems, policies & procedures
- Manage law school public interest resource center & supervise Externship Program

Communicator

- Represent criminal justice and civil rights policy reform priorities before the federal government, state legislatures, city council, coalitions, conference panels and community events
- Respond to media requests and develop communication strategies
- Speaker/moderator/keynote at countless conferences, town halls, panels, workshops, and trainings nationwide
- Prepare diverse range of documents, including issue briefs, reports, book chapters, articles, memos, summaries, blogs

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

- Open Society Foundations and Open Society Policy Center, *Advocacy Director for Criminal Justice & Senior Policy Analyst*; Manager, Justice Roundtable Coalition, 2002-present
- National Bar Association Law Camp – summers 2001-present
- Howard University School of Law
 - Director, Equal Justice Program, 1995-2002
 - Supervisor, Externship Program, 1995-2002
 - Adjunct Professor, 1995-2009
- American University Washington College of Law
 - Adjunct Professor, 1997-99
- American Civil Liberties Union, Legislative Counsel, 1991-1995
- Women's Legal Defense Fund, Public Policy Counsel, 1989-1991
- Private Practitioner, Law Office of Nkechi Taifa, Esq. 1987-1991
- National Prison Project of the ACLU Foundation, Staff Attorney, 1984-1987
- Washington Office on Africa, Network Organizer/Office Manager, 1980-1983
- NationHouse Watoto School, First Grade Teacher, 1977-1980

EDUCATION

- George Washington University Law School
 - Juris Doctor degree, 1984*
- Howard University
 - Bachelor of Arts degree, 1977, magna cum laude*

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

- United States Supreme Court
- United States Court of Appeals
for the District of Columbia Circuit
- District of Columbia Court of Appeals

SELECTED HONORS and AWARDS

- Black Resistance Matters Award, Malcolm X Commemoration Comm (2017)
- Wiley Branton Award, National Bar Association (2016)
- Hope House Dads Award, Hope House (2016)
- IBW Legacy Award (2016)
- Cornelius "Neil" Alexander Humanitarian Award, DC Commission on Human Rights (2015)
- Marcus Garvey Outstanding Community Service Award, UNIA (2015)
- Wiley Branton Award Recipient, Washington Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs (2014)
- Umoja Award, National Black United Front (2014)
- Certificate of Achievement for Outstanding Advocacy, Congresswoman Maxine Waters (2011)
- NBA Crump Law Camp Service Award, National Bar Association (2011)
- President's Award, Washington Council of Lawyers (2005)
- African Consciousness Award, United Black Community (2004)
- Furthering the Legacy Award, Howard Law School Students (2002)
- Warren Rosmarian Award for Excellence in Teaching and Service, presented by Howard University School of Law, (2000)
- Professor of the Year, Howard Law School (1999)
- Pro Bono Publico Award for outstanding leadership of Howard Law School's Equal Justice Program, (1996)
- Outstanding Social Engineer Award, Howard Law Student Bar Assn (1996)
- Dedicated Service Award, Kwanzaa Children's Party, Inc. (1996)

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

- American Constitution Society for Law and Justice
- Bipartisan Summit
- Coalition for the Fair Sentencing of Youth
- Congressional Black Caucus Foundation
- CATO Institute
- Charles Koch Institute
- Data & Civil Rights: A New Era of Policing and Justice
- Drug Policy Alliance
- National African American Reparations Commission
- National Press Club
- CNN & Company, Fox Morning News, BET, C-SPAN, WPFW-FM
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

- Council of State Governments
- Black Law Students Association
- Howard Law Journal Symposium
- Institute of the Black World 21st Century
- Maryland Legal Services Partnership
- National Alliance Against Homelessness
- National Bar Association
- National Black Caucus of State Legislators
- National Black Police Association
- National Conference of Black Lawyers
- NAACP/NAACP-LDF
- US Department of Agriculture
- Washington Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs
- Yale Law School, Harvard Law School, Howard University & Law School, University of the District of Columbia, David A. Clarke UDC School of Law, Georgetown Univ. Law School, George Washington Law School, American University, George Mason University, Univ. of Arkansas Law School, University of Connecticut, University of Chicago Law School, University of Maryland Law School, Sojourner-Douglas College, Columbia University Law

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- Numerous guest blog posts in American Constitution Society, Open Society Voices and Huffington Post
- “Racism in the U.S. Criminal Justice System - Institutionalized Genocide?” Issue Brief, American Constitution Society (Nov. 3, 2016)
- “Righting Historical Wrongs Through Clemency,” Washington Informer Newspaper (Feb. 28, 2014)
- “Integrative Solutions to Interrelated Issues: A Multidisciplinary Look Behind the Cycle of Incarceration,” Harvard Law and Public Policy Review, Co-Author, (summer 2009)
- “The “Crack/Powder Disparity: Can the Intl Race Convention Provide a Basis for Relief?” American Constitution Society for Law & Policy (2006)
- *Tulia, Tip of the Drug War Iceberg*, Book Project Chair (2005)
- “Roadblocked Reentry: The Prison After Imprisonment,” National Bar Association Magazine (2003)
- “Re-Enfranchisement! A Guide for Individual Restoration of Voting Rights” Advancement Project (2002)
- “Codification or Castration – the Applicability of the International Race Convention to the US Criminal Justice System,” Howard Law Journal (1997)
- “Cracked Justice: A Critical Examination of Cocaine Sentencing,” Univ. of West Los Angeles Law Review (1996)
- “Civil Forfeiture vs. Civil Liberties,” New York Law School Law Review (1994)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Legal Advisory Team, Legacy of GU272 Alliance, 2016 – present
- National African American Reparations Commission, 2016 - present
- Board of Directors, Clemency Resource Center, 2015-2016
- Commissioner & Chair, DC Commission on Human Rights, 2007-2014
- Honorary Board, Washington Council of Lawyers 2013-present
- Advisory Panel Member, Leadership Institute Fellowship Program, Center for American Progress (2012-present)
- Board of Advisors – Institute of the Black World 21st Century (2009-2011)
- Advisory Board Member, American Bar Association Racial Justice Improvement Project (2010-present)
- Founder and President, Legacy Empowerment Center, (2010-present)
- Founder and CEO, SCHOLARgifts, LLC (2013-present)
- Producer and Host, Legacy Justice Radio Show (2010-2011); & Spotlight on Justice (2014)
- Co-Founder, Solace for Sistas, (2008- present)
- Member, Board of Directors, Bureau of Rehabilitation, Inc. (1999-2004)
- Founding Member and Chair of Legislative Commission, National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (1999-2004)
- Member, Board of Directors, American Civil Liberties Union of the National Capital Area (1998-2004)
- Chair, D.C. Chapter, National Conference of Black Lawyers (1990-1995)
- Member, D.C. Bar Public Service Activities Corporation (early 1990's)
- Member, Board of Directors, DC Prisoners' Legal Services, Inc. (1995-2001)
- Member, Advisory Board, Kwanzaa Children's Committee, (1980 – present)
- Founder and Director, Saturday School for youth, (1972-1984)