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**Agudath
Israel
of America**
אגודת ישראל באמריקה

January 20, 2021

Rabbi Abba Cohen
Vice President for Government Affairs
Washington Director and Counsel

The Honorable Gary Peters
The Honorable Rob Portman
Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Confirm Alejandro Mayorkas as DHS Secretary

Dear Senators Peters and Portman:

As the Committee has now concluded its hearing, I write on behalf of Agudath Israel of America, a national Orthodox Jewish organization, to urge members to act expeditiously in approving confirmation of Alejandro Mayorkas to become the nation's next Secretary of Homeland Security. Moving the nomination swiftly to the full Senate is critical, as delay runs the risk of endangering America's security.

It is particularly at this moment of national turmoil and uncertainty that it is most critical to have a chief executive at the helm of the Department of Homeland Security, establishing its priorities and implementing its strategies and procedures. Amid the whirlwind of media reports, we have heard of threats and dangers coming from the fringes of the Right and the Left. We have heard of rumors of planned and potential attacks. The U.S. must be ready and on alert. There is simply not an hour – indeed, not a minute – to lose in securing the nation and reassuring its citizens that there is nothing to fear.

We hasten to add that we look for swift confirmation also because we believe that Mr. Mayorkas is an excellent choice for the formidable challenges ahead. He has extensive experience in the range of security-related issues that come within the Department's jurisdiction. During his hearing, he showed a deep sensitivity, an impressive understanding and a hands-on expertise in regard to addressing hate and domestic terror in our nation. We in the Jewish community, who live in the shadow of both foreign and home-grown dangers and have experienced an uptick in anti-Semitic incidents including murder and mayhem, have found Mr. Mayorkas to be a vital friend, partner and asset in helping to confront hate and in enhancing the security of our community institutions under DHS's Nonprofit Security Grant Program. We firmly believe he will exhibit this care and commitment to all segments of our nation.

Again, we urge you to expedite and approve Mr. Mayorkas's confirmation as U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security, and we look forward to swift approval by the full Senate.

Sincerely yours,

Rabbi Abba Cohen

RAC/me
cc: The Honorable Charles Schumer
The Honorable Mitch McConnell