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U.S. SENATOR CARDIN MEETS WITH ATTORNEY GENERAL NOMINEE ERIC HOLDER

Washington, DC – U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD), a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, today met with Eric Holder, President-elect Obama’s nominee for Attorney General. Following their meeting, Senator Cardin released the following statement:

“President-elect Obama has made an excellent choice in Eric Holder to be the 82nd Attorney General of the United States. Mr. Holder has an impressive, lifelong record of public service and broad experience within the Department of Justice and the Judiciary. He and I had a positive conversation, particularly about the urgent need to restore trust and confidence in a department that has strayed far from its role as a non-partisan protector of the rule of law and the civil rights of all Americans.

“I was pleased to hear Mr. Holder confirm his commitment that as Attorney General he would serve the American people and not just the White House. Our nation has recently witnessed an Attorney General who lacked independent judgment in criminal investigations, personnel decisions, and the protection of constitutional liberties. The political firings of U.S. attorneys and the blatant disregard of federal wiretapping laws both severely damaged the credibility of the Department of Justice. During our meeting, Mr. Holder assured me that such partisan entanglements would not be tolerated by him or President Obama.

“Mr. Holder and I also discussed the disturbing developments in the Civil Rights Division, which has been abysmal in its performance during the current administration. I urged the future Attorney General to vigorously enforce our civil rights laws to protect all Americans from unlawful discrimination. Ensuring strong enforcement of civil rights laws and restoring funding to the Civil Rights Division will be among my top priorities in the new Congress. Mr. Holder and I also discussed the urgent need to close the justice gap and provide civil legal assistance to Americans who cannot afford to hire an attorney.

“I look forward to Mr. Holder’s confirmation hearing in January. I have no doubt that he will serve our nation with honor and distinction as the next Attorney General of the United States.”

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