

**STATEMENT OF A PANEL CONSISTING OF EMILY HART-HOLIFIELD, COMPTON, CA; EVELYN BRYANT, LIBERTY COUNTY, GA; DEANIE FRAZIER, COMMISSIONER, CHATHAM COUNTY, GA; AND REV. LAWRENCE F. HAYGOOD, TUSKEGEE, AL**

Ms. HOLIFIELD. Senator, just for the record, in order to try to conform with the 5 minutes, I would like to have my whole testimony entered into the record, but I am going to skip through the statement.

The CHAIRMAN. It will be.

Ms. HOLIFIELD. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. We appreciate the difficulty in cutting it to 5 minutes. I am not sure it is true, but someone once told me that Thomas Jefferson said, "I would have written you a shorter letter, except I did not have the time," I am paraphrasing it. So, it is hard, and I appreciate that. Thank you for trying.

Ms. HOLIFIELD. Thank you very much.

Honorable Chairman Biden and honorable Senators of this great Senate committee, I am Emily Hart-Holifield, an educator employed by the Compton Unified School District. I am a Compton Community College senior trustee member. Further, I am the person who seconded the famous motion on Saturday, July 20, 1991, at a regular meeting of the Compton Branch of the NAACP, to support Judge Clarence Thomas, President Bush's nominee for appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Mr. Chairman, little did I know that this action taken by the NAACP Compton, CA branch, would echo all around this Nation, waking people up and causing them to really think. I have named this motion, Mr. Chairman, "A candle, a flame for mankind."

Mr. Chairman, I am supporting Judge Clarence Thomas, because I feel that he will make an excellent judge, a judge that will represent all of the people throughout this Nation. Judge Clarence Thomas is qualified, is a role model and has developed a philosophy of self-help and self-reliance, and I do not see anything wrong with that.

Senators at this time, I cannot think of a more timely cycle than now for the self-help and self-reliance program that U.S. Supreme Court Judge Clarence Thomas will be able to implement as soon as you honorable Senators have confirmed him to this appointment.

Honorable Senator Kennedy, whom I have had and still do have a lot of respect for, I would like for these pictures to enter into the record as a beautiful school in Compton, CA, that bears his namesake and carries the legacy for his name and his family name in Compton, CA.

I live about 1½ miles from Robert F. Kennedy Elementary School, in Compton, CA, and I wanted to say for the record, Senator Kennedy—he is not here now, but I want the record to reflect—when I go through this area each morning on my way to work, I am reminded of the respectful work that the Kennedy family carried out during the civil rights movement. I am reminded, Senator, that you gave so much, your precious sacrifices can never be bought, paid for or forgotten.

I am reminded that you and your family are winners, and I am also reminded that when Judge Clarence Thomas is confirmed, he

will also be a winner in the 1990's, and he too will have a legacy, one that he so well deserves.

All of the Senators here today, I would like to say to you, I do not believe that Judge Clarence Thomas could have come from his impoverished background and forget his background now. I do not believe that Judge Clarence Thomas will forget his mother or his sister or any unfortunate group. I do not believe that he will forget the struggles that he has experienced to get him where he is today, soon to be a U.S. Supreme Court Justice, when you confirm him. Senators, I do not believe that Judge Clarence Thomas will forget the trust that each of you put in him.

With these points in mind, I believe that Judge Clarence Thomas will be the judge to help guide us through the U.S. Supreme Court and to the next century and far beyond the year 2000.

Honorable Senators, when I seconded the motion on Saturday, July 20, 1991, to support Judge Clarence Thomas, at the regular Compton, CA Branch NAACP meeting, I never dreamed that this seconded motion would be unanimously supported by all members present, with a 32-to-0 vote. I never dreamed that the echoes that would go around this Nation would be so widespread all over this great Nation. I never dreamed that this action on behalf of Judge Clarence Thomas by the NAACP Compton Branch would cause so many people to reactivate their critical thinking skills.

Honorable Senators, I never dreamed that this little cotton-picker from the plantations of Louisiana would ever be able to present herself on behalf of anyone, and especially in front of the great Members of the U.S. Senate.

Honorable members, I want to thank you for the golden opportunity, for listening to me today, Tuesday, September 17, 1991. Senators, I am proud of each of you, and I am proud of Judge Clarence Thomas, and I am thankful to President George Bush for nominating him.

As I have previously stated, Senators, the NAACP Compton Branch, in July, on July 20, 1991, voted to support Judge Clarence Thomas for appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court, and this action sparked a very positive interest in people thinking all over the Nation, regardless of color, regardless of ethnic background, and even regardless of gender.

There was an article that I wish you to read and to remember, presented by Mrs. Margaret-Bush Wilson. As you note for the record, Senators, Mrs. Margaret-Bush Wilson was the executive director of the NAACP, and she is on record not supporting the present position of the NAACP.

Honorable Senators, you are important and you mean so much to me and the people around these United States. Your votes will be counted for confirming Judge Clarence Thomas' successful appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court, making it possible for him to move with his work on and helping to strengthen affirmative action programs, and thus making it possible for affirmative action programs to work, so everyone in this Nation can prosper. He has stated that affirmative action programs are not working now for everyone, and I certainly agree.

Honorable Senators, I would like to remind you of a brief statement made by Judge Thomas at a National Institute for Employment Equity, on May 26, 1984, where he stated:

I have heard it stated over and over again that we as a Nation have done enough and that the doors of opportunity for women, blacks, Hispanics, and those of other national origin and religion have been opened, that the laws against injustice are on the books, and the people are tired of the plight of the minorities. Well, no one is more tired of the plight than the Nation's minorities. No one is more worn out by the fight to stay decent and respectful, to stand in the midst of the squalor of East Harlem and look out toward the towering spires of power in Manhattan, less than 30 or 40 blocks away, and say there the doors of opportunity are opened to say nothing. The question is how do I get there. Those 40 blocks, those short 40 blocks are, for many, a lifetime.

I want to thank you. If I do have some time, I will come back. Thank you very much, Senator.

[The statement of Ms. Holifield follows:]