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## NEWS Release

Friday, December 4, 2020

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**Deleted:** Monday, November 30

### **National Association of Social Workers, (NASW) Calls upon Governor Gavin Newsom to appoint a Social Worker to fill the U.S. Senate Seat vacated by Kamala Harris**

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW), which is the nation's largest organization of professional social workers, calls upon the Governor to appoint Rep. Karen Bass, MSW or Rep. Barbara Lee, MSW to fill the U.S. Senate seat vacated by Senator Kamala Harris. Rep. Bass and Rep. Lee are both social workers and bring a valuable perspective and highly relevant skill set to Congress and to the important work of national policymaking.

"Reps. Bass and Lee are both dedicated and highly experienced public servants with exceptional track records championing individuals, families and communities in California," stated Deborah Son, Executive Director of the National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter (NASW-CA). "As social workers, they possess a unique understanding of the assets and challenges not only in their respective districts, but of the state as a whole. This includes a keen grasp of human needs and behavior, health and mental health services delivery, and the many interacting systems that affect individuals and groups," stated Ms. Son.

Rep. Bass has long been a trail blazer in California. As the 67th Speaker of the State Assembly and the first woman in the United States to serve as a Speaker of a state legislative body, she exemplifies strong leadership and a commitment to public service. In 2010, then Assemblymember Bass received the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award for her leadership during the Great Recession. In 2018, she was elected chair of the Congressional Black Caucus. As a member of the powerful Judiciary Committee, she has played a crucial role in crafting and gaining passage of vitally important legislation, such as the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act. Congresswoman Bass received her Master's in Social Work from the University of Southern California.

Rep. Lee is also a former member of the California State Assembly and the California State Senate and has been a member of Congress since 1998. After the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, she was the only member of Congress to vote against the use of force. She was guided in this and other decisions by the social work principles and ethics she has consistently embraced. Congresswoman Lee is the only African American woman in Democratic Leadership, serving as Co-Chair of the Policy and Steering Committee. She is the current chair of the Congressional Social Work Caucus, former chair of the Congressional Black Caucus (111th Congress), co-chair of the Congressional

Progressive Caucus (109th & 110th Congresses), and a founding member of the LGBT Equality Caucus. Congresswoman Lee has been a staunch advocate for ending poverty, women's rights, ensuring access to healthcare and mental health care services and a champion for HIV/AIDS legislation. She received her Master's in Social Work from the University of California at Berkeley.

The California Legislative Black Caucus and other affiliated groups are also recommending the appointment of Rep. Bass and Rep. Lee to ensure that the U.S. Senate seat will be filled by a highly qualified African-American woman to replace the only Black woman in the U.S. Senate.

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