



NAACP

Derrick Johnson
*President and
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*Chairman
National Board of Directors*

June 23, 2023

The Honorable Don Beyer
U.S. House of Representatives
1119 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dear Congressman Beyer:

On behalf of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), I am writing in strong support of the selection of Ms. Joan Trumpauer Mulholland for the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Ms. Mulholland has a long and storied history of fighting for the basic civil and human rights of all Americans. She was born in 1941, a proud Southern White girl, and has resided in Virginia's 8th Congressional District for nearly her entire life. Her love for the South and her deep Christian spirituality caused her at an early age to begin questioning the segregated practices that she witnessed throughout her beloved Southland, most especially in her Arlington domicile and at her mother's Georgia homestead of Milledgeville where she would be sent for summer vacations. This deep questioning continued through her high school years, particularly when Governor Almond encouraged closing the schools rather than have Virginia bow to the U.S. Supreme Court *Brown v. Board of Education* decision on school integration.

It was during her first year of college at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, that the nonviolent student civil rights movement erupted. Within two months, Ms. Mulholland (then known as Joan Trumpauer) joined the front lines and was arrested for her commitment to equal treatment under the law. That commitment continued when later that year Ms. Mulholland joined the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee and took an active part in ensuring that public facilities in your district would be integrated – first the lunch counters like those at the People's Drug Store and Drug Fair in Cherrydale, and then the recreational facilities at Glen Echo just over the river. In all, Ms. Mulholland would take part in over 50 sit-ins and demonstrations, and was arrested at least six times for her belief that the American creed and her own Christian principles demanded equal treatment of all people.

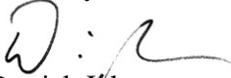
Ms. Mulholland moved on from the relatively placid lunch counters of Northern Virginia to the deeply entrenched and violent bastions of segregation in the deep South, first as a Freedom Rider and then as the first full-time White student to enroll at the historically Black Tougaloo College just outside Jackson, Mississippi. Here Ms. Mulholland became thoroughly involved in the local movement, working side-by-side with the NAACP's own Medgar Evers and other movement luminaries to bring the message of universal equity to those for whom the idea was anathema. Ms. Mulholland's most enduring involvement in the civil rights movement was as part of a small integrated cadre of students and teachers who, under the auspices of Medgar Evers and the Mississippi NAACP, walked into a Woolworth's Five and Dime Store in downtown Jackson and sat down together hoping to be served. Instead, the group was pelted with catsup and mustard, doused with sugar and other counter condiments, cursed at

and brutalized by an angry mob that had gathered to try to dislodge them. Local police allowed the assault of the demonstrators to go on for three hours, refusing to enter the store and stop the violence.

Most recently, after a 35-year career as a teacher's aide in Arlington County Schools, Ms. Mulholland became a tireless advocate for civil rights throughout the country, bringing her story of activism and allyship to classrooms, churches, organizations and convention centers nationwide. She has been honored for her service to God and Country by many civic and religious organizations, including the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, the International Civil and Human Rights Museum in Atlanta, the International Civil Rights Center & Museum in Greensboro, the Anti-Defamation League, and the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated.

We at the NAACP applaud Ms. Mulholland's lifelong commitment to racial and human equality, and we wholeheartedly support her nomination for the Congressional Medal of Honor. Her exemplary life demonstrates that one person truly can make a difference in moving our society forward along the long arc of Justice and Equality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Johnson", written over a faint horizontal line.

Derrick Johnson
President and CEO