



U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division
Housing and Civil Enforcement Section

SHR:RTH:mg

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June 3, 2013

The National LGBT Bar Association
1301 K Street, NW
Suite 1100 East Tower
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Re: Nomination of Holly Lincoln for 2013 Best LGBT Lawyers Under 40

I write in support of the nomination of Holly Lincoln to be included in the 2013 class of Best Lawyers Under 40. As Chief of the Civil Rights Division's Housing and Civil Enforcement Section, I am responsible for supervising the work of the Section where Holly Lincoln has worked as a trial attorney since 2008. In her time in the Section, Ms. Lincoln has worked on a range of issues, demonstrating her tremendous skill as a lawyer and dedication as an advocate. Ms. Lincoln is a very talented and hard-working attorney who is truly committed to the work of the Division and to LGBTI issues.

Among her most significant accomplishments, Ms. Lincoln was a key member of a team of attorneys who successfully resolved a groundbreaking fair lending action against Wells Fargo Bank, the largest residential home mortgage lender in the United States. The case involved allegations that the bank engaged in a nationwide pattern or practice of discrimination in its residential lending activities from 2004 to 2009. Wells Fargo also had systematically placed African American and Latino borrowers in subprime loans, while placing similarly-qualified white borrowers in prime loans. Ms. Lincoln's tireless efforts and dedication to the case contributed to the achievement of a settlement—the largest per-victim recovery ever reached in a Division lending discrimination case—that requires Wells Fargo to pay more than \$184 million to compensate victims of discrimination, and to make a \$50 million investment in a homebuyer assistance program in several metropolitan areas hardest hit by the bank's discrimination and the foreclosure crisis.

In another matter, Ms. Lincoln was instrumental in litigating and resolving claims of sexual harassment in housing. She proved skillful in developing a compelling factual record, conducting all aspects of discovery and working with experts. As importantly, Ms. Lincoln also demonstrated an ability to relate to particularly vulnerable victims of harassment.

Ms. Lincoln also played a key role in ensuring that the rights of a small religious congregation seeking to locate in a Los Angeles neighborhood were protected. Ms. Lincoln submitted Statements of Interest for the United States in a private lawsuit, ultimately arguing that the City's actions had violated the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act. The court ruled consistent with Ms. Lincoln's arguments, setting an important precedent on key RLUIPA issues.

Through her work in the Section, Ms. Lincoln also has demonstrated her commitment to issues of particular importance to the LGBTI community. Ms. Lincoln collaborated with others in the Division on a matter in which a boarding school denied admission to a student on the grounds that his HIV status posed a direct threat to the school community. She also dedicated significant time to researching legal questions surrounding challenges faced by transgender and intersex students as they seek college or university housing.

In addition to her impressive work within the Section, Ms. Lincoln has made significant contributions to the work of the Division's GLBT Working Group. Ms. Lincoln played an important role in creating the Division's "It Gets Better" video, including prepping the people interviewed in the video and selecting and organizing the footage for the personal interview montage. Ms. Lincoln has served as co-chair of the Legislation subcommittee and as a member of both the HIV/AIDS and the Sex and Gender Identity subcommittees of the GLBT working group.

Ms. Lincoln's contributions do not end with her case work and her committee work. She has served as an outstanding mentor to new attorneys in the Section, has vetted candidates for federal court vacancies, making recommendations directly to the White House Counsel's Office, and has served as co-counsel in a *pro bono* case on behalf of a plaintiff mother in a child custody case.

Ms. Lincoln is a true asset to the Section and Division. She's a talented lawyer and a dedicated advocate. She works exceptionally well with her colleagues and never hesitates to contribute to further the work of the Section in ways large and small. I enthusiastically support Ms. Lincoln's nomination for this year's class of Best LGBT Lawyers Under 40.

Sincerely,

By:



Steven H. Rosenbaum
Chief

Housing and Civil Enforcement Section