



NEWS RELEASE
For immediate release
November 18, 2015

Media Contact: Lenore Ostrowsky
publicaffairs@usccr.gov
(202) 376-8591

U. S. Commission on Civil Rights Mourns the Passing of Jacqueline Berrien, Recent Chairwoman of the EEOC

Washington, DC – The United States Commission on Civil Rights joins the nation in mourning the passing of former EEOC Chairwoman Jacqueline Berrien, accomplished civil rights lawyer and champion of civil rights over a long and successful career.

Among her many accomplishments prior to chairing the EEOC, she served as the assistant counsel litigating voting rights and school desegregation cases at the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, as associate director-counsel of the Ford Foundation, and as a faculty member at Harvard Law School.

Chairwoman Berrien graduated from Oberlin College and Harvard Law School, and then clerked for a federal judge before joining the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and the Women's Rights Project of the ACLU. At the EEOC, she increased investments in staffing, training and technology that increased productivity and substantially reduced backlogs of pending charges despite increased numbers of discrimination filings. During her tenure, the agency won the largest award to date under the Americans with Disabilities Act in *EEOC v. Hill Country Farms*. Also, under her leadership the EEOC issued important new guidance on the use of arrest and conviction records in employment decisions.

Martin R. Castro, Chairman of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, stated, "The nation has lost a tremendous public servant, and the civil rights community has lost a leader. Chair Berrien's was a life well led, not only for herself, but also for her nation. She leaves a great legacy for the rest of us to follow."

#####

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is an independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the President and Congress on civil rights matters and issuing a federal civil rights enforcement report. For information about Commission's reports and meetings, visit

<http://www.usccr.gov>.