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[Statement Regarding the Confirmation of
Frederick D. Cooke, Jr., As Corporation Counsel of
the District of Columbia]

J. Clay Smith Jr.

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SCHOOL OF LAW

HOWARD UNIVERSITY
2900 VAN NESS STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008
FOUNDED BY GENERAL O. O. HOWARD

September 16, 1987

STATEMENT OF J. CLAY SMITH, JR., DEAN,
HOWARD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW REGARDING
THE CONFIRMATION OF FREDERICK D. COOKE, JR.,
AS CORPORATION COUNSEL OF THE DISTRICT OF
COLUMBIA

I am pleased to participate in the confirmation hearings of the Honorable Frederick Douglas Cooke, Jr., to be Corporation Counsel of the District of Columbia. In doing so, I would like to note that the Howard University School of Law and the Office of Corporation Counsel have a relationship that spans nearly 120 years. For example, near 1869, the year that the Law School opened its doors, a white abolitionist lawyer from Ohio, Albert Gallatin Riddle, was appointed Corporation Counsel for the District of Columbia. In 1869, Riddle, under the deanship of John Mercer Langston, became one of the first law professors at the Howard University School of Law.

Over the last 119 years, many of our law graduates have worked in the Corporation Counsel's Office and many more will do so in the future. Today, I am here to report to the distinguished members of the District of Columbia City Council about the worthiness of Frederick Douglas Cooke, Jr., to have the trust of the people of the District of Columbia bestowed upon him as Corporation Counsel.

Mr. Cooke, a native of the District and a resident of this City, is an outstanding human being. This quality provides the citizens with a Corporation Counsel rooted in the people. Cooke is a hard-working person.

This quality provides the people with a person who will burn the midnight oil. Cooke is knowledgeable about matters involving public law, has great technical skills, and a feel for public policy. These qualities will enable him to feel and to think his way through the challenges that face him in assisting all elements of the managing government to better govern the District of Columbia. Cooke is smart, but not too smart to misunderstand that governance requires patience and tolerance.

Frederick D. Cooke, Jr., was appointed by the mayor on March 19, 1987 to become Corporation Counsel. Mayor Marion S. Barry, Jr., has made an outstanding appointment and I applaud his judgment, and so should the good people of the District of Columbia.

I will not review Mr. Cooke's work experiences today because you have that information before you. I can only say how proud I am, and how secure I feel, to have a product of the public school system of this City, and a graduate of the Howard University School of Law on watch as Corporation Counsel of the District of Columbia.

I urge the Council of the District of Columbia to confirm Mr. Cooke.