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HOWARD UNIVERSITY

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SCHOOL OF LAW

November 7, 1989

**STATEMENT OF J. CLAY SMITH, JR.
PROFESSOR OF LAW, HOWARD UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF LAW REGARDING THE CONFIRMATION
OF DR. HERBERT ORDRE REID, SR.,
AS CORPORATION COUNSEL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

I am pleased to participate in the confirmation hearings of the Honorable Herbert Ordre Reid, Sr., to be Corporation Counsel of the District of Columbia. On September 16, 1987, I had the privilege to appear before the Council of the District of Columbia in support of the confirmation of Frederick Douglas Cooke, Jr., who served in the capacity of Corporation Counsel for twenty eight months.

During the Cooke hearings, I observed that

"the Howard University School of Law and the Office of Corporation Counsel have a relationship that spans nearly 120 years. [N]ear 1869, the year that the Law School opened its doors a white [A]bolitionist 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 Howard University School of Law."

On January 6, 1990, the law school will celebrate its 121st anniversary. The speedy confirmation of Dr. Herbert O. Reid, Sr. is symbolic of the close and meaningful relationship that the District of Columbia and the Howard University School of Law have enjoyed. Frederick D. Cooke, Jr. was a law student under Dr. Reid at Howard, as was I. David A. Clarke, also a Howard Law School graduate, is chairman of this Council. Many members of the Council have had long and deep ties with the Law School and have personal knowledge of the significant work of Dr. Reid in his own right to better the conditions of the citizens of this city, as well as knowledge about the dual role that he and Frank D. Reeves, for whom the Municipal Center is named, had on the political development of the District of Columbia.

Dr. Reid, a native of Wilson, North Carolina, has been a resident of the District of Columbia for many years. Born in segregation, he has been a proponent of an integrated society and of political equality as well. He is rooted in the people of this city--all of the citizens this city. He favors good government and has the personal character and integrity to support the same, the good sense to protect the interest of the citizens of our city and the commitment to uphold the public trust that will be placed in his care, should the Council confirm the nomination of Mayor Marian S. Barry, Jr., as Corporation Counsel of the District of Columbia.

Dr. Reid should be confirmed. He has already been demonstrated his leadership capacity as Corporation Counsel since Mayor Barry appointed him to this post on July 28, 1989. See Sherwood, Barry Names Counsel Reid To Top District Legal Post, Washington Post, July 29, 1989, at B1, col. 2. Dr. Reid is not only "a good man," he is a competent, Harvard trained, Howard-matured lawyer. I have expanded on Dr. Reid's distinguished career in a tribute to Dr. Reid which appeared in The Jurist, the alumni journal, which is attached to my statement. Retirement of Herbert Ordre Reid, Sr., 3 The Jurist 18 (Summer 1989).

Finally, I commend the good judgment of Mayor Barry for nominating Dr. Reid for Corporation Counsel.

Thank you.

Attachment