

AFL-CIO

LEGISLATIVE ALERT

January 13, 2017

Dear Senator Grassley and Ranking Member Feinstein:

I am writing on behalf of the AFL-CIO to express our opposition to the confirmation of Senator Jefferson Beauregard Sessions, III (R-AL) as the 84th Attorney General of the United States. Our opposition is based upon a review of the testimony provided during his confirmation hearing and of his record as a U.S. Senator, Alabama Attorney General, and U.S. attorney.

The objectivity of the attorney general should not be in question. Yet throughout his decades-long career, Senator Sessions has expressed policy positions that demonstrate a troubling pattern of hostility toward legal protections depended upon by working families. His 20-year Senate record includes opposition to the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, the Violence Against Women Act reauthorization, and the Shepard-Byrd Hate Crimes Act. As a Senator, he has denounced the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act provisions that cover students with social, learning, and emotional difficulties. Though he was one of the 98 Senators who voted to reauthorize the Voting Rights Act in 2006, Senator Sessions applauded the Supreme Court's 5-4 *Shelby County v. Holder* decision—halting the pre-clearance requirements protecting voters in states with the worst histories of racial discrimination in voting.

Senator Sessions testified that he would enforce federal laws as attorney general despite his past opposition to their enactment. However, other troubling aspects of his record suggest the values he would bring to the role of our nation's chief law enforcement officer. As a Senator, he:

- supported a federal voter ID requirement;
- challenged the 14th Amendment principle that all persons born in the United States are U.S. citizens;
- criticized Department of Justice consent decrees;
- opposed bipartisan criminal justice reform efforts; and
- made statements suggesting that he considers any history of civil rights work enough to render a nominee unfit for government service.

We are alarmed by the nomination of Senator Sessions for attorney general and the testimony provided during his confirmation hearing has failed to allay the AFL-CIO's concerns. I urge you to oppose the confirmation of Jefferson Beauregard Session III as Attorney General of the United States.

Sincerely,



William Samuel, Director
Government Affairs Department

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American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

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