



## Hearings Begin on Nomination of Sessions as Attorney General

The Senate Judiciary Committee began hearings on January 10 to consider President-elect Donald Trump's nomination of Senator Jeff Sessions (shown, R-Ala.) for the position of U.S. attorney general. During the opening statement at the hearing, Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) observed that today's hearing "hardly introduces Senator Sessions to the Committee. No, we're here today to review the character and qualifications of a colleague who has served alongside us in the Senate for twenty years. That includes time as the Ranking Member of this Committee." (Empasis in original.)



Sessions began by reading from a prepared statement, during which he told his fellow committee members, "You know who I am. You know what I believe in. You know that I am a man of my word and can be trusted to do what I say I will do. You know that I revere our Constitution and am committed to the rule of law. And you know that I believe in fairness, impartiality, and equal justice under the law."

The last time Sessions appeared before a confirmation hearing, in 1986, he had been nominated for a federal judgeship by President Ronald Reagan. But his nomination was rejected following accusations that he had made "racist" comments and had not sufficiently protected voting accessibility for black voters. This time around, in anticipation of a resurrection of such accusations during the scheduled testimony on January 11 of three Democratic members of the Congressional Black Caucus — Georgia Representative John Lewis, New Jersey Senator Cory Booker, and Louisiana Representative Cedric Richmond — Sessions preemptively addressed those old charges.

"I abhor the Klan and its hateful ideology," Sessions said. "I never declared the NAACP was un-American."

The statement was an apparent reference to a demonstration by protesters before the hearing began, which continued through his opening statements. Right as Sessions was walking in, two demonstrators dressed as members of the Ku Klux Klan were escorted out of the committee room.

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Sessions continued by saying he was well aware of civil rights and their importance.

"I deeply understand the history of civil rights and the horrendous impact that relentless and systemic discrimination and the denial of voting rights has had on our African-American brothers and sisters," he said. "I have witnessed it. We must continue to move forward and never back. I understand the demands for justice and fairness made by our LGBT community. I will ensure that the statutes protecting their civil rights and their safety are fully enforced. I understand the lifelong scars born by women who are victims of assault and abuse."



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on January 10, 2017

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A Fox News opinion piece posted on January 10 started by saying, “President-elect Donald Trump’s pick for attorney general is facing nothing short of a racially-motivated, political lynch mob on Capitol Hill.” It continued by offering the opinion that the demonstration by the protesters dressed as Klansmen “set the stage for what will no doubt be an ugly attempt by Democrats to assassinate the character of the gentleman from Alabama.”

The Fox piece noted that while the NAACP and congressional Black Caucus “smeared Sessions’ character without offering a shred of documented evidence that he’s a racist,” “there is plenty of evidence to support the claims that he’s a defender of civil rights.”

The article provided as examples the fact that during his tenure as a U.S. attorney, Sessions desegregated schools.

Also, he prosecuted the head of the Alabama Ku Klux Klan for murder. The piece cited a *New York Post* report that Sessions’ prosecution led to a multi-million dollar judgment that broke the back of the Klan.

However, if the Left intends to smear Sessions, he appears to be well on top of things and — as noted above — came out of the box shooting down the charges even before Booker and his cronies start their work on January 11.

Sessions has earned a reputation as one of the Senate’s most vocal opponents of our nation’s loose immigration policies and has described President Obama as a “dictator” because of his policies of resettling illegal immigrants in states that do not want them. Sessions has called attention to the potential for terrorists from place such as Syria infiltrating the United States hidden among refugees, and he has also opposed legal immigrations plans such as the H-1B guest-worker program on the grounds that they give American jobs to foreign workers.

In his many statements regarding immigration, Sessions has highlighted the economic downfalls of legal immigration programs and their impact on the job market for American workers, as well as pointed out the potential danger of terrorists such as members of ISIS infiltrating our nation among refugees from Syria.

In April 2015, Sessions and Senate Minority Whip Richard Durbin (D-Ill.) led a bipartisan coalition of senators who sent a letter to then-Attorney General Eric Holder, Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson, and Labor Secretary Thomas Perez asking them to investigate Southern California Edison’s use of the H-1B guest-worker program to replace American workers.

A post on Sessions’ Senate webpage said that he was a leading opponent of President Obama’s “unconstitutional executive amnesties, which gives jobs and benefits to illegal workers at the expense of struggling families.”

In a speech on the Senate floor in 2015, Sessions strongly condemned President Obama’s request for funding for refugee resettlement, basing his opposition on both economic and security threats found in the president’s plan. He addressed the matter of security as follows:

The President persists in this plan even though his own officials, testifying before my Immigration Subcommittee, conceded there is no database in Syria with which to vet refugees.... The FBI director tells us there are now active ISIS investigations in all 50 U.S. states.

Our subcommittee has identified dozens of examples of foreign-born immigrants committing and attempting acts of terror on U.S. soil. Preventing and responding to these acts is an effort encompassing thousands of federal agents and attorneys and billions of dollars: in effect, we are



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voluntarily admitting individuals at risk for terrorism and then, on the back end, trying to stop them from carrying out their violent designs.

During his remarks to the Judiciary Committee on January 10, Sessions stated: “If I am confirmed, protecting the American people from the scourge of radical Islamic terrorism will continue to be a top priority of the Department of Justice. We will work diligently to respond to threats, using all lawful means to keep the American people safe from our nation’s enemies.”

Most knowledgeable Washington political analysts believe Sessions should receive confirmation easily, and the noise raised during the hearings will amount to nothing more than an annoying irritation.

*Photo: AP Images*

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