



WASHINGTON BUREAU · NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE  
1156 15<sup>TH</sup> STREET, NW SUITE 915 · WASHINGTON, DC 20005 · P (202) 463-2940 · F (202) 463-2953  
E-MAIL: [WASHINGTONBUREAU@NAACPNET.ORG](mailto:WASHINGTONBUREAU@NAACPNET.ORG) · WEB ADDRESS [WWW.NAACP.ORG](http://WWW.NAACP.ORG)

## **URGENT ACTION ALERT**

**DATE:** January 4, 2017  
**TO:** Concerned Parties  
**FROM:** Hilary O. Shelton, Director, NAACP Washington Bureau

### **NAACP OPPOSES THE CONFIRMATION OF SENATOR JEFF SESSIONS OF ALABAMA TO SERVE AS ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES**

***AS THE JANUARY 10-11, 2017 SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE CONFIRMATION HEARINGS  
APPROACHES, THE SENATE MUST DEFEAT THIS NOMINEE AND URGE PRESIDENT ELECT  
TRUMP TO NOMINATE SOMEONE WITH A PROVEN RECORD OF PROMOTING AND  
ENFORCING LAWS WHICH PROTECT THE CIVIL RIGHTS, VOTING RIGHTS AND CIVIL  
LIBERTIES OF ALL AMERICANS***

#### **THE ISSUE:**

On November 18, 2016, President-elect Donald Trump announced the nomination of Senator Jefferson Beauregard "Jeff" Sessions III (AL) to serve as U.S. Attorney General. On December 20, 2016, the NAACP Executive Committee of the National Board of Directors voted unanimously to oppose this nomination, based on the fact that throughout his careers as the Attorney General for the State of Alabama, the US Attorney for the Southern District of Alabama, and the Assistant US Attorney for the Southern District of Alabama, Jeff Sessions was accused of demonstrating, through his words and his actions, a deeply concerning disregard for civil, human, and voting rights and the needs of the people he served and represented. Furthermore, as a U.S. Senator, he has consistently opposed many of the very crucial laws and programs for which he will be responsible for enforcing at the US Department of Justice. He has earned an average score of just over 10% out of 100% on the NAACP Civil Rights Federal Legislative Report Card throughout his 19 years as a US Senator.

Specifically, to name but a few of the troubling positions taken by Sen. Sessions which were opposed by the NAACP, he consistently voted against the expansion of the Hate Crimes Prevention Act; he has consistently opposed safe, sane and sensible measures to stem the plague of gun violence across our country; he voted against the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act; and he has supported discriminatory requirement for photo identification when voting.

In addition to his woeful voting record, Senator Sessions has also voiced opinions which are diametrically opposed, and in too many cases, directly hurtful to the NAACP and the communities we serve. Specifically, he has referred to the NAACP as "un-American" and "Communist-inspired" because we "forced civil rights down the throats of people." He has also accused the NAACP and other like-minded groups of teaching anti-American values. In 2015, Senator Sessions said that calls to remove the Confederate flag from public buildings are among efforts by "the left" to "delegitimize the fabulous accomplishments of our country"; and in 2006 he referred to the 1965 Voting Rights Act as "a piece of intrusive legislation."

Given his past record of dismal regard for basic civil and human rights, the NAACP opposes the nomination of Jeff Sessions to serve as US Attorney General. On January 3, 2017, NAACP President and CEO Cornell William Brooks joined with the Alabama State Conference of Branches, led by Alabama State Conference President Benard Simelton in a sit-in of Senator Sessions' state offices to decry his dismal record on civil and voting rights and to call for him to withdraw his nomination. We further call on President Elect Trump and all future Presidents to nominate individuals to serve as Attorney General who have a demonstrated commitment to the constitutional promises of civil rights, voting rights and civil liberties protection and enforcement for all, and an articulated respect and promise to promote the civil and human rights of all people.

## **THE ACTION WE NEED YOU TO TAKE:**

Contact both your Senators and **URGE THEM TO OPPOSE THE NOMINATION OF SENATOR JEFF SESSIONS TO SERVE AS ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES.** To contact your Senators you may:

✓ **Make a Phone Call:**

Call your Senators in Washington by dialing the Capitol Switchboard and asking to be transferred to their offices. The switchboard phone number is **(202) 224-3121** (see message section, below).

✓ **Write a Letter**

To write letters to your Senators, send them to:  
The Honorable (name of Senator)  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**A SAMPLE  
LETTER IS  
ATTACHED**

✓ **Send a Fax**

If you would like to send a fax, call your Senators' offices (through the Capitol switchboard) and ask for their fax numbers (you can use either the attached sample letter or the message box, below).

✓ **Send an E-Mail**

To send an e-mail to your Senators, go to [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov); click on "*Find Your Senators*". Look up your Senators by state; go to their web sites for e-mail addresses.

## **REMEMBER TO CONTACT BOTH YOUR SENATORS!!!!**

### **THE MESSAGE**

- Throughout his careers as a U.S. Senator, the Attorney General for the State of Alabama, the US Attorney for the Southern District of Alabama, and the Assistant US Attorney for the Southern District of Alabama, Jeff Sessions has demonstrated a clear disrespect for people's civil, human, and Constitutional rights and needs.
- Jeff Sessions' voting record while in the U.S. Senate is indicative of his disregard for many of the laws and programs for which he will be responsible for enforcing. During his tenure in the U.S. Senate, he has voted against key civil rights laws and programs such as the Hate Crimes Prevention Act, the Violence Against Women Act, and gun violence prevention initiatives.
- Senator Sessions has also made derogatory comments about the NAACP and the 1965 Voting Rights Act and he has spoken of the Confederate Battle Flag, and all that it represents, in glowing terms.

### **THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS IMPORTANT MATTER!!!**

If you have any questions, call Hilary Shelton at the Washington Bureau at (202) 463-2940.

### **MEMBERSHIP IS POWER! JOIN THE NAACP TODAY.**

To become an NAACP member or to sign up for e-mail legislative and press updates, visit [www.naacp.org](http://www.naacp.org)

# Sample Letter

(date)

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

## RE: OPPOSITION TO THE CONFIRMATION OF JEFF SESSIONS TO SERVE AS ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_;

As your constituent, I am writing to express my deep opposition to the confirmation of Senator Jeff Sessions to serve as U.S. Attorney General. Throughout his careers, first in the office of the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Alabama, then as the Attorney General for the state of Alabama, and most recently as the U.S. Senator from Alabama, Senator Sessions has shown a clear disrespect for the civil rights and human rights and needs of all people; he has shown a striking disregard for the very laws, policies, and programs for which he would be responsible for protecting and promoting as U.S. Attorney General; and he has demonstrated an obvious disdain for groups with which he disagrees, which are very often the same groups which have been struggling for years, if not centuries, to compel our country to live up to its Constitutional promise of equality and every American being able to pursue "life, liberty, and happiness."

As has been copiously documented, through his words, his actions, and his voting record as the junior Senator from Alabama for the past twenty years, Senator Sessions is not the right person to serve as Attorney General of the United States. He has demonstrated a clear disrespect, disregard, and even disdain for the very laws, policies, and programs which have been put into place to protect the rights of the American people.

How can we give our approval to a man to enforce and maintain the laws, policies and programs of our country which he has opposed so many times as a US Senator?

In closing, I urge you again, in the strongest terms possible, to oppose the confirmation of Jefferson Beauregard "Jeff" Sessions III to serve as US Attorney General of the United States. Please contact me in the very near future and let me know how you intend to vote on this crucial nomination and what more I can do to help you prevent his confirmation. Thank you.

Sincerely,

(sign and print your name and  
remember to include your address)

***Remember to contact  
BOTH your U.S. Senators.***

**NAACP OPPOSES THE CONFIRMATION OF SENATOR JEFFERSON  
BEAUREGARD “JEFF” SESSIONS III TO SERVE AS ATTORNEY  
GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES AND URGES PRESIDENT ELECT  
TRUMP TO NOMINATE SOMEONE WITH A PROVEN AND  
ESTABLISHED RECORD OF PROMOTING AND ENFORCING LAWS  
WHICH PROTECT THE CIVIL RIGHTS, VOTING RIGHTS AND CIVIL  
LIBERTIES OF ALL AMERICANS**

Adopted by the NAACP Executive Committee of the  
National Board of Directors

*December 20, 2016*

**WHEREAS**, on November 18, 2016, President-elect Donald Trump announced that upon taking office in January, 2017, he would nominate Senator Jefferson Beauregard “Jeff” Sessions III to serve as U.S. Attorney General; and

**WHEREAS**, throughout his careers as a U.S. Senator and before, when he served as the Attorney General for the State of Alabama, the US Attorney for the Southern District of Alabama, and the Assistant US Attorney for the Southern District of Alabama, Jeff Sessions was accused of demonstrating, through his words and his actions, a deeply concerning disregard for the basic civil and human rights and needs of the people he served and represented; and

**WHEREAS**, as came to light during his (failed) nomination by then-President Ronald Reagan to serve as a judge of the US District Court for the Southern District of Alabama in early 1986, Jeff Sessions also has an expressed disregard for the NAACP or many of our partners in the struggle for civil rights, and justice for all. It was during his confirmation hearing that a Department of Justice Attorney testified that Sessions had referred to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) as “un-American” and “Communist-inspired” because they “forced civil rights down the throats of people.” At the same confirmation hearing, another Department of Justice attorney testified that Sessions said that he believed the NAACP, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Operation PUSH and the National Council of Churches were all un-American organizations teaching anti-American values; and

**WHEREAS**, in response to a question during his 1986 confirmation hearing from then-U.S. Senator Joe Biden on whether he had called the NAACP and other civil rights organizations “un-American”, Sessions replied “I’m often loose with my tongue. I may have said something about the NAACP being un-American or Communist, but I meant no harm by it”; and

**WHEREAS**, in his 19 years as a US Senator, Jeff Sessions, has supported the NAACP position on civil and human rights issues through his votes an average of

only 10.5% of the time, according to the NAACP federal legislative civil rights report cards; and

**WHEREAS**, as a U.S. Senator, Jeff Sessions has consistently voted against the “Hate Crimes Prevention Act”; he has consistently opposed safe, sane and sensible measures to stem the tide of gun violence including opposing expanded background checks to cover more gun purchasers, renewing the assault weapons ban and increasing the penalty for straw purchasers and gun traffickers; and

**WHEREAS**, he voted in favor of requiring federal “photo identification” from all voters every time a vote was called on the issue; Senator Sessions consistently voted against the reauthorization of the “Violence Against Women Act”; he voted against requiring states to address the Disproportionate Minority Confinement of incarcerated juveniles; Senator Sessions voted against the creation of a national commission charged with a thorough review of our federal criminal justice system, which looks at the origins of the criminal justice problems identified by the Commission, and offers suggested solutions to correct the issues identified; Senator Sessions has consistently opposed legislation to protect women’s health care by voting against Title X funding and supporting a ban on all federal funds going to Planned Parenthood and its affiliates; and

**WHEREAS**, despite the fact that in 2006 Senator Sessions joined his colleagues in a unanimous vote in the US Senate in support of the reauthorization of portions of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, he is quoted as calling the 1965 Act “a piece of intrusive legislation” earlier in the year, as well as working initially to weaken section 5 of the Act until the Judiciary Committee Mark-up in which he decide not to move the pre-posted amendment; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition to opposing the nominations of NAACP-supported, Loretta Lynch to be Attorney General and that of NAACP-supported Debo Adegbile, to serve as the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights in 2014, as a U.S. Senator, Jeff Sessions has voted against the NAACP federal civil rights policy position on judicial nominations in most cases, including voting against Sonia Sotomayor, the first Latina to serve on the U.S Supreme Court, as well as Elena Kagen. He also voted against Robert Wilkins for the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals and Ronnie White (twice) for the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri. He voted to support controversial, alleged segregationist Judge Charles Pickering to the 5<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals and in favor of John Roberts and Samuel Alito to the US Supreme Court; and

**WHEREAS**, In 2015, after the mass killings at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, a number of prominent politicians from both sides of the aisle led a call for the removal of the Confederate Battle Flag from public buildings, Senator Sessions said that calls to

remove the Confederate flag are among efforts by “the left” to “delegitimize the fabulous accomplishments of our country.”

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the NAACP calls on President Elect Trump and all future Presidents to nominate individuals to serve as Attorney General who have a demonstrated commitment to the constitutional promises of civil rights, voting rights and civil liberties protection and enforcement for all, and an articulated respect and promise to promote the civil and human rights of all people, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, place of national origin, sexual preference or station in life; and

**THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the NAACP oppose any individual for the position of Attorney General who has an established record of opposing the very civil rights, civil liberties, or human rights laws, policies, and programs for which he or she would be responsible for enforcing; and

**THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People opposes the confirmation of Senator Jeff Sessions to serve as Attorney General of the United States.