



ISSUE UPDATE

DATE: February 8, 2017
TO: Concerned Parties
FROM: Hilary O. Shelton, Director, NAACP Washington Bureau

NAACP-OPPOSED ATTORNEY GENERAL NOMINEE SENATOR JEFF SESSIONS CONFIRMED BY FULL SENATE VOTE WAS 52 YEAS – 47 NAYS

THE ISSUE:

Despite millions of phone calls, emails, letters, and personal visits to Senators, and a highly contentious debate on the Senate floor which lasted through the night, Senator Jefferson “Jeff” Beauregard Sessions III was confirmed in the evening of 2/8/17 by the full Senate to be the 84th Attorney General of the United States.

Throughout two days of hearings, as well as millions of phone calls, emails, letters and 30 hours of debate on the floor of the US Senate, which included Senator Elizabeth Warren (MA) being not allowed to read a letter written in 1986 by Mrs. Coretta Scott King, it was demonstrated conclusively that Senator Sessions lacks the judgment, the temperament, and the independence to serve effectively as Attorney General of the United States. Senator Sessions’ record throughout his careers demonstrate a clear disregard, disrespect, and even disdain for the civil, human, voting and Constitutional rights of racial and ethnic minorities, women, the disabled, members of the LGBT community, and others who suffer from discrimination in this country. Despite these demonstrated flaws, Senator Sessions was confirmed by the US Senate to serve as the next Attorney General on February 8, 2017.

The tragedy is that as Attorney General, he will ultimately be responsible for protecting the rights of all Americans to live freely, to pursue happiness, and to participate in our democracy.

In addition to his woeful voting record, Senator Sessions has also voiced policy and 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* during its reauthorization as “a piece of intrusive legislation.”

Throughout the confirmation process, the NAACP expressed staunch opposition to Senator Sessions’ confirmation and we expressed our very real concerns that as Attorney General he will not work to protect the civil, human, voting and Constitutional rights of all Americans. Those concerns remain. It is now our hope however that Senator Sessions will work hard to prove these concerns wrong and that he will lead the Department of Justice in a manner that protects fundamental civil rights and promotes opportunity and achievement for all Americans. Meanwhile, the NAACP will continue to work at the federal, state, and local levels to ensure that rights of all Americans are respected and protected.

Read the “controversial” letter sent by Coretta Scott King to the Senate Judiciary Committee in 1986 here: [Coretta Scott King's 1986 statement and testimony on Jeff Sessions' U.S. District Court nomination in Alabama](#)

SEE HOW EACH SENATOR VOTED, P. 2

SESSIONS NOMINATION / CONFIRMATION

Confirmation of Jefferson "Jeff" Beauregard Sessions III to be Attorney General of the United States
Mr. Sessions was confirmed, 52 – 47, on February 8, 2017

The NAACP opposed the confirmation.

ALABAMA

Shelby ▽
Sessions P

ALASKA

Sullivan ▽
Murkowski, L. ▽

ARIZONA

McCain ▽
Flake ▽

ARKANSAS

Boozman ▽
Cotton ▽

CALIFORNIA

Feinstein ▲
Harris ▲

COLORADO

Gardner ▽
Bennet ▲

CONNECTICUT

Blumenthal ▲
Murphy ▲

DELAWARE

Coons ▲
Carper ▲

FLORIDA

Nelson ▲
Rubio ▽

GEORGIA

Perdue ▽
Isakson ▽

HAWAII

Hirono ▲
Schatz ▲

IDAHO

Risch ▽
Crapo ▽

ILLINOIS

Durbin ▲
Duckworth ▲

INDIANA

Young ▽
Donnelly ▲

IOWA

Grassley ▽
Ernst ▽

KANSAS

Moran ▽
Roberts ▽

KENTUCKY

McConnell ▽
Paul ▽

LOUISIANA

Cassidy ▽
Kennedy ▽

MAINE

King (independent) ▲
Collins ▽

MARYLAND

Cardin ▲
Van Hollen ▲

MASSACHUSETTS

Warren ▲
Markey ▲

MICHIGAN

Peters ▲
Stabenow ▲

MINNESOTA

Klobuchar ▲
Franken ▲

MISSISSIPPI

Cochran ▽
Wicker ▽

MISSOURI

Blunt ▽
McCaskill ▲

MONTANA

Daines ▽
Tester ▲

NEBRASKA

Sasse ▽
Fischer ▽

NEVADA

Cortez Mastro ▲
Heller ▽

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Hassan ▲
Shaheen ▲

NEW JERSEY

Booker ▲
Menendez ▲

NEW MEXICO

Udall, Tom ▲
Heinrich ▲

NEW YORK

Schumer ▲
Gillibrand ▲

NORTH CAROLINA

Burr ▽
Tillis ▽

NORTH DAKOTA

Heitkamp ▲
Hoeven ▽

OHIO

Portman ▽
Brown ▲

OKLAHOMA

Inhofe ▽
Lankford ▽

OREGON

Wyden ▲
Merkley ▲

PENNSYLVANIA

Toomey ▽
Casey ▲

RHODE ISLAND

Reed, Jack ▲
Whitehouse ▲

SOUTH CAROLINA

Graham ▽
Scott ▽

SOUTH DAKOTA

Rounds ▽
Thune ▽

TENNESSEE

Alexander ▽
Corker ▽

TEXAS

Cruz ▽
Cornyn ▽

UTAH

Hatch ▽
Lee ▽

VERMONT

Leahy ▲
Sanders (Independent) ▲

VIRGINIA

Warner ▲
Kaine ▲

WASHINGTON

Murray ▲
Cantwell ▲

WEST VIRGINIA

Manchin ▽
Capito ▽

WISCONSIN

Baldwin ▲
Johnson ▽

WYOMING

Enzi ▽
Barrasso ▽

VOTE KEY

▲ = Voted in support of the NAACP position and in opposition to the confirmation of Mr. Sessions
▽ = Voted in opposition to the NAACP position and in support of the confirmation of Mr. Sessions

P = voted "present" citing a conflict of interest