



January 9, 2017

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary
152 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Feinstein:

On behalf of the 700,000 members and officers of the Communications Workers of America (CWA), I am writing you in strong opposition to the confirmation of Sen. Jeff Sessions to serve as Attorney General of the United States.

Sen. Sessions's lengthy public record is totally inconsistent with the qualities that are needed in the Attorney General. The Department of Justice's mission is to enforce the laws of the United States in a way that protects the rights of all people without prejudice or discrimination, yet Sen. Sessions has a demonstrated record of unfair treatment on the basis of race, national origin, gender, and sexual orientation, all while showing a complete disinterest in protecting the rights of working people.

Sen. Sessions's outright hostility toward voting rights alone renders him unfit to serve as Attorney General. In particular, as U.S. Attorney, Sen. Sessions attempted to prosecute voting rights activists working to increase African-American registration and turnout. He has subsequently voiced strong support for discriminatory voter ID laws and for the Supreme Court's 2013 ruling in *Shelby County v. Holder* that gutted the Voting Rights Act. Monumental work has been done to combat our nation's history of discrimination regarding the right to vote, and we need an Attorney General who will build on those efforts, not one who will make it even harder for Americans to exercise this fundamental constitutional right.

More generally, Sen. Sessions has endorsed views that show that he believes certain groups are not entitled to equal protection under the law. For instance, he supported a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage, opposed reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act in 2013, proposed legislation effectively denying unaccompanied minors access to legal counsel in our immigration courts, and made positive statements about the Ku Klux Klan.

Additionally, Sen. Sessions has repeatedly shown a willingness to deny workers and consumers their day in court so as to protect too-big-to-fail banks and other large corporations, raising significant concerns about his commitment to equal access to our justice system. For example, he has been a longtime advocate for the use of "forced arbitration," in which companies include policies in employment and consumer contracts that prevent workers and consumers from contesting contractual breaches in court. In fact, in 2000, Sen. Sessions argued against the proposed Civil Rights Procedures Protection Act, which would have barred forced arbitration

clauses in cases concerning employment discrimination, by saying that it "could expose businesses to large jury verdicts."

Meanwhile, as a member of Judiciary Committee, Sen. Sessions has shown exceedingly little interest in addressing financial fraud committed by large banks, as he skipped hearings in 2010 and 2011 on financial fraud, as well as a hearing in 2012 on lending discrimination and foreclosure abuses. Instead, Sen. Sessions has focused on maintaining draconian sentencing policies for petty crimes and opposed meaningful overhaul of the criminal justice system.

In short, it is clear that Sen. Sessions does not believe in equal justice under the law. Therefore, I ask that you oppose his nomination for Attorney General. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shane Larson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Shane Larson
Legislative Director
Communications Workers of America (CWA)