

Testimony of
Honorable John B. Larson

January 22, 2008

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN JOHN B. LARSON (CT-01)

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE HEARING ON EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS
JANUARY 22, 2008

INTRODUCTION OF KEVIN J. O'CONNOR
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT
NOMINATED FOR ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

I am proud to be here to introduce Kevin O'Connor. He has brought honor and distinction to every endeavor he's been associated with. This is a proud moment for him, his wife Kathleen, their children, and the entire O'Connor family. It's a proud moment for the State of Connecticut.

Our local paper - the Hartford Courant - wrote of Mr. O'Connor's nomination, "In Kevin J. O'Connor the White House has someone whose record and integrity promise to help restore confidence and stability to the agency."

I couldn't agree more.

In his five years as the United States Attorney for Connecticut, his office successfully prosecuted numerous public officials - both Republicans and Democrats - for corruption and bribery charges.

Mr. O'Connor has been adamant in enforcing our civil rights laws. He's protected our children from predators by successfully implementing a Project Safe Childhood program that combats online sex crimes against children.

He won a conviction in a federal civil rights trial against the former Mayor of Waterbury, Connecticut, for sexually abusing two minor children.

And, he's sent a clear message that racial discrimination has no place in the State of Connecticut with the prosecution of racially motivated crimes.

Mr. O'Connor personally prosecuted a man who pled guilty to violating federal civil rights laws by accosting a colleague and making racially derogatory comments.

As United States Attorney, he's successfully tried a criminal case, argued two cases before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit and appeared in court on behalf of the United States on numerous other matters.

But, he also took his job and responsibility outside of the courtroom and onto the streets by implementing a Project Safe Neighborhoods program.

He worked to reduce gun crime because there is no better way to lower our crime rates than to prevent criminal behavior before it begins.

I know firsthand from working with him and seeing the level of commitment, understanding, and coordinated involvement he brings to a problem.

He also took on companies in our state whom he believed were violating the Clean Water Act. They were found guilty of dumping sewage into our waterways and falsifying records. In addition to obtaining two of the largest criminal penalties in New England history for their convictions, he secured commitments from the companies to clean up their acts and improve environmental compliance efforts.

Mr. O'Connor recently served with distinction as Chief of Staff to the Attorney General. He assumed this position during a difficult time for the Department and the U.S. Attorney community. He helped maintain consistency during the transition between the Acting Attorney General and Attorney General Michael Mukasey. He stepped up to the job by instituting processes that fixed department problems and ensured integrity.

His previous experience includes a stint as a partner in a large Connecticut law firm. He also enforced our Nation's securities laws while working for the United States Securities and Exchange Commission. And, he teaches law at the University of Connecticut and George Washington University. He has been an active and involved member of our community, serving on boards with distinction.

As Associate Attorney General, I am confident that he will continue to enforce the Nation's laws and continue to show a strong and impartial commitment to the rule of law.

I am honored to introduce Kevin O'Connor to you for your consideration of his nomination to the position of Associate Attorney General, for which he is eminently qualified, and like everything else he has done distinguished himself on behalf of the nation he is sworn to serve.