

Statement of

The Honorable Evan Bayh

United States Senator
Indiana
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Madame Chair, Ranking Member Specter, and other distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee, thank you for this opportunity today to introduce an individual for whom I have great respect and confidence, Professor Dawn Johnsen.

Professor Johnsen is an accomplished scholar and experienced government lawyer who is well-qualified to serve as Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legal Counsel. Her experience as Acting Assistant Attorney General under President Clinton means she will be ready to provide the President and the Attorney General with outstanding legal advice from day one. In particular, she already understands the challenge of providing advice that is grounded in the law and mindful of the separation of powers enshrined in our Constitution.

As someone whose family suffered losses in the attacks of September 11th, Professor Johnsen understands the serious and sobering challenges that threaten our national security. But she also knows that we can defeat our enemies - no matter how determined they may be - without sacrificing our cherished American values and ideals.

Professor Johnsen has also demonstrated the intellectual heft required of this position. She is a graduate of Yale College and Yale Law School, where she served as an editor of the Yale Law Journal.

As a professor of law at Indiana University, she has written extensively on Constitutional law, the separation of powers, and legal constraints on executive power. There is no doubt that she has both the knowledge and expertise to help navigate the challenging matters of law and justice which will confront our President.

One of the most important qualifications for any high-ranking government lawyer is good judgment. Professor Johnsen demonstrated outstanding judgment when she married into one of Indiana's great families. Professor Johnsen and her husband John Hamilton - who is the nephew of former Congressman Lee Hamilton - exemplify the best Hoosier values of family and community. Despite the many demands on her time, Professor Johnsen is a devoted mother to her two boys, Matthew and Eric, and teaches Sunday school at First United Methodist Church in Bloomington.

I have high confidence that, if confirmed as Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legal Counsel, Professor Johnsen will be a valuable member of the new Administration and will to provide our Commander-in-Chief with the outstanding legal advice he needs to protect and defend our country.

Madame Chair and Ranking Member Specter, it is my distinct pleasure to present for this committee's consideration Professor Dawn Johnsen.