

**Nomination of Loretta E. Lynch to be Attorney General of the United States**  
**Question for the Record**  
**Submitted February 9, 2015**

**QUESTION FROM RANKING MEMBER LEAHY**

1. In 2008, following thorough congressional hearings, agency consultations, and stakeholder outreach, Congress passed and President George W. Bush signed Public Law 110-344, the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act, into law. Throughout its evolution, Pub. L. 110-344 enjoyed broad, bipartisan, bicameral support; the bill passed the U.S. House of Representatives by a vote of 422-2 and was unanimously adopted in the Senate. I was an original cosponsor on the Senate side along with several other senators, while Congressman John Lewis was the lead cosponsor on the House side.

The Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act established an intensive, 10-year collaborative effort to codify the Department of Justice's Cold Case Initiative. It authorized the designation of a Deputy Chief of the Criminal Section of the Civil Rights Division and a Supervisory Special Agent in the Civil Rights Unit of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to coordinate and lead intensive investigations of open, civil rights cases. These designees would work with the Department of Justice's Community Relations Service and State and local law enforcement officials to thoroughly investigate unsolved civil rights murders and bring closure and justice to the victims' families, friends, loved ones, and communities.

**Will you review the Department's implementation of the bill and work with the bill's sponsors and the Members of this Committee to ensure that the goals of this important law are fully realized?**

**RESPONSE:** Racially motivated murders from the civil rights era constitute some of the greatest blemishes upon our nation's history. I assure you that I fully support the goals of the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act of 2007. If confirmed, I will review the Department's implementation of the bill and I look forward to working with the bill's sponsors and the Members of this Committee to achieve the goals of this important law to the greatest extent possible.

My understanding is that the Department has committed considerable efforts to the cold case initiative. FBI agents and attorneys from the Civil Rights Division have traveled to FBI field offices to conduct on-site reviews of cases and to formulate specific investigative plans. Civil Rights Division attorneys have worked alongside FBI agents in conducting interviews of witnesses and combing through available evidence. The FBI has offered rewards for information regarding these crimes. Department officials also have reached out to the community, including groups such as the NAACP, Southern Poverty Law Center, the Cold Case Truth and Justice Project, and others, to enlist their assistance in identifying potential cases and uncovering information that may lead to prosecutions. And considerable resources have been devoted to investigating specific cases.

I understand that the Department has in some cases been successful in bringing cold case prosecutions. But in many cases, the Department cannot bring a prosecution because all subjects are deceased, or subsequent unrelated events have caused evidence to be destroyed, or the passage of time has weakened memories.

Success in this initiative will not be measured in prosecutions alone, but rather in our ability to uncover the truth where possible. For those cases where, for a variety of reasons, a prosecution is not possible, it is important to work to provide closure to affected families and communities. Closure for families, as well as an assurance to the American people that each of these matters has received a full, thorough and independent review, was a significant part of the goal of the Emmett Till Act, and to which, if I am confirmed, I am fully committed.