

**Testimony of Kurt White at
the Senate Committee on the Judiciary Hearing on
the Nomination of Elena Kagan**

It is a great honor to be asked to testify at this hearing. I am most grateful, however, for the opportunity to help dispel the untrue and unfair accusations of anti-military bias that have been leveled against Ms. Elena Kagan, a woman who, in my short time of knowing her as the Dean of the Harvard Law School, went to such great lengths to show her respect for and appreciation of the United States military.

I first heard Ms. Kagan speak in the fall of 2007 as she gave the welcoming address to the students of my incoming law school class. I'm sure she had many eloquent and inspiring words, but one part of her speech has remained particularly memorable for me. As Dean Kagan was ensuring that every student knew what a special class they had just joined, she listed the number of states and countries from which students had come, and then began listing some of the incredible honors and accomplishments of those seated around me. As I listened to the descriptions of my classmates, I was somewhat surprised that I had been allowed to join this amazing group as a student at the Harvard Law School. I was most surprised, however, when Dean Kagan listed the number of military veterans among those that other students should keep their eyes out for and try to meet during the coming year. It was a proud moment to be recognized in such a way. That the Dean of the Law School saw military service as something so important that she would mention the veterans to the entire class on our first day made me immediately feel welcome and respected at my new school. I later found out from veterans in other classes that Dean Kagan made a point of highlighting military members each year during her welcoming address.

Later in the year, I had the rare opportunity as a first year law student to spend an evening visiting intimately with the Dean. Around Veterans Day Dean Kagan hosted a dinner for military veterans and their families. During this dinner Dean Kagan spoke very little other than to express her deep gratitude to the current and former service members seated at the table. The evening consisted mostly of Dean Kagan asking about our military experiences, listening intently to our stories, and expressing her sincere appreciation for our service. It was truly moving to have the Dean of the Law School take an evening out of her schedule to show her thanks to our small group of veterans. More, she made each of us feel as if she was the one honored to have the opportunity to dine and visit with us for the night. This event, which Ms. Kagan pioneered during her time as dean, meant a great deal to the veterans at the school, and luckily has been continued by her successor.

Also while Dean Kagan was leading the law school, numerous other attempts were made to emphasize the service of the military veterans at the school, from articles published on the school Web site to highlights of veterans and their stories in alumni newsletters.

During the time I knew her as Dean of the Harvard Law School, Ms. Kagan's support of the military was clearly evident. Over the past three years I have been a part of numerous conversations between veterans at the Harvard Law School where we have spoken

warmly of the graciousness shown to us since we arrived at Harvard Law School, most notably by Dean Kagan. It might seem that this would not be a conversation that we would need to have with each other on multiple occasions, but such was the importance of Dean Kagan's words and actions to us and to our overall experience at the law school that we could not help but discuss it frequently. It is thus my honor to have the opportunity to answer the anti-military accusations made against Ms. Elena Kagan, who did so much to make me and my fellow veterans feel welcome, appreciated, and revered, and whose admiration and support of the military were clearly evident during her time as Dean of the Harvard Law School.