

**Opening Statement of Attorney General-Designate Loretta E. Lynch**  
**U.S. Senate Confirmation Hearing**  
**Wednesday, January 28, 2015**  
**Washington, D.C.**

Thank you, Chairman Grassley, Senator Leahy, and distinguished members of the Committee. I am honored to appear before you in this historic chamber, among so many dedicated public servants. I want to thank you for your time this morning – and President Obama for the trust he has placed in me by nominating me to serve as Attorney General of the United States.

It is a particular privilege to be joined today by members of my family – including my husband, Stephen Hargrove, my father Rev. Lorenzo Lynch, my brother Rev. Leonzo Lynch and his wife NiCole, as well as several other family members who are here today.

Mr. Chairman, one of the privileges of my position as United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York is welcoming new attorneys into the office and administering to them the oath of office. It is a transformative moment in the life of a young prosecutor. As they stand before me, prepared to pledge their honor and their integrity, I remind them that they are making their oath not to me, not to my office, or even to our Attorney General, but to our Constitution, the fundamental foundation for all that we do. It is that document and the ideals embodied therein to which I have devoted my professional life. Senators, if confirmed as Attorney General I pledge to you and to the American people that the Constitution, the bedrock of our system of justice, will be my lodestar as I exercise the power and responsibility of that position.

I owe much to those who have worked to make its promise real for all Americans, beginning with my own family. All of them – and so many others – have supported me on the

path that has brought me to this moment, not only through their unwavering love and support, but through their shining examples, and the values that shaped my upbringing.

My mother, Lorine, who was unable to travel here today, is a retired English teacher and librarian for whom education was the key to a better life. She recalls people in her rural community pressing a dime or a quarter into her hands to support her college education. As a young woman she refused to use segregated restrooms because they did not represent the America in which she believed. She instilled in me an abiding love of literature and learning, and taught me the value of hard work and sacrifice. My father, Lorenzo, is a fourth-generation Baptist preacher who in the early 1960's opened his Greensboro church to those planning sit-ins and marches, standing with them while carrying me on his shoulders. He has always matched his principles with action – encouraging me to think for myself, but reminding me that we all gain the most when we act in service to others.

It was the values my parents instilled in me that led me to the Eastern District of New York, and from my parents I gained the tenacity and resolve to take on violent criminals, to confront political corruption and to disrupt organized crime. They also gave me the insight and compassion to sit with the victims of crime and share their loss. Their Values have sustained me as I have twice had the privilege of serving as United States Attorney, leading an exceptional office staffed by outstanding public servants, and these values guide and motivate me even today.

Should I be confirmed as Attorney General, my highest priorities will continue to be to ensure the safety of our citizens, to protect the most vulnerable among us from crime and abuse, and to strengthen the vital relationships between America's brave law enforcement officers and the communities they are entrusted to serve.

In a world of complex and evolving threats, protecting the American people from terrorism must remain the primary mission of today's Department of Justice. If confirmed, I will work with colleagues across the executive branch to use every available tool to continue disrupting catastrophic attacks against our homeland and bringing terrorists to justice. I will draw upon my extensive experience in the Eastern District of New York, which has tried more terrorism cases since 9/11 than any other office. We have investigated and prosecuted terrorist individuals and groups that threaten our nation and its people – including those who have plotted to attack New York city's subway system, JFK airport, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, and U.S. troops stationed abroad, as well as those who have provided material support to foreign terrorist organizations. And I pledge to discharge my duties always mindful of the need to protect not just American citizens but also American values.

If confirmed, I intend to expand and enhance our capabilities in order to effectively prevent ever-evolving attacks in cyberspace, expose wrongdoers, and bring perpetrators to justice. In my current position, I am proud to lead an office that has significant experience prosecuting complex, international cybercrime, including high-tech intrusions at key financial and public sector institutions. If I am confirmed, I will continue to use the combined skills and experience of our law enforcement partners, the Department's Criminal and National Security Divisions, and the United States Attorney community to defeat and to hold accountable those who would imperil the safety and security of our citizens through cybercrime.

I will also do everything I can to ensure that we are safeguarding the most vulnerable among us. During my tenure as U.S. Attorney, the Eastern District of New York has led the prosecution of financial fraudsters who have callously targeted hard working Americans, including the deaf and the elderly, and stolen their trust and their hard-earned savings. We have

taken action against abusers in over one hundred child exploitation and child pornography cases, and have prosecuted brutal international human trafficking rings that sold victims as young as 14 and 15 years old into sexual slavery. If confirmed as Attorney General, I will continue to build upon the Department's record of vigorously prosecuting those who prey on those most in need of our protection and I will continue to provide strong and effective assistance to survivors who we must both support and empower.

Throughout my career as a prosecutor, it has been my honor to work hand in hand with dedicated law enforcement officers and agents who risk their lives every day in the protection of the communities we all serve. I have served with them. I have learned from them. I am a better prosecutor because of them. Few things have pained me more than the recent reports of tension and division between law enforcement and the communities we serve. If confirmed as Attorney General, one of my key priorities would be to work to strengthen the vital relationships between our courageous law enforcement personnel and all the communities we serve. In my career, I have seen this relationship flourish – I have seen law enforcement forge unbreakable bonds with community residents and have seen violence-ravaged communities come together to honor officers who risked all to protect them. As Attorney General, I will draw all voices into this important discussion.

In that same spirit, I look forward to fostering a new and improved relationship with this Committee, the United States Senate, and the entire United States Congress – a relationship based on mutual respect and Constitutional balance. Ultimately, I know we all share the same goal and commitment: to protect and serve the American people.

Now, I recognize that we face many challenges in the years ahead. But I have seen – in my own life, and in my own family – how dedicated men and women can answer the call to achieve great things for themselves, for their country, and for generations to come.

My father – that young minister who carried me on his shoulders – has answered that call. As has my mother, that courageous young teacher who refused to let Jim Crow define her. Standing with them are my uncles and cousins who served in Vietnam – one of whom is with me here today - and my older brother, a Navy SEAL, who answered that call with their service to our country.

As I come before you today in this historic chamber, I still stand on my father's shoulders, as well as on the shoulders of all those who have gone before me and who dreamed of making the promise of America a reality for all and worked to achieve that goal.

I believe in the promise of America because I have lived the promise of America.

If confirmed to be Attorney General of the United States, I pledge to all of you and to the American people that I will fulfill my responsibilities with integrity and independence. I will never forget that I serve the American people, From all walks of life, who continue to make our nation great – as well as the legacy of all those whose sacrifices have made us free. And I will always strive to uphold the trust that has been placed in me to protect and defend our Constitution, to safeguard our people, and to stand as the leader and public servant that they deserve.

Thank you all, once again, for your time and your consideration. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today. I look forward to your questions – and to all that we may accomplish in the days ahead, together, in the spirit of cooperation, shared responsibility, and justice.