



Sexuality Information and Education
Council of the United States

January 15, 2019

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chair
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
152 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: SIECUS Opposition to the Confirmation of William Barr for Attorney General

Dear Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Feinstein:

The Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS) writes to express our strong opposition to the confirmation of William Barr for the role of Attorney General. We call upon the Senate Judiciary Committee, as well as the full Senate, to reject his nomination, as Mr. Barr is uniquely unfit to serve as the chief law enforcement officer of the nation. Mr. Barr's record proves that he is incapable of protecting constitutional rights.

SIECUS has served as the national voice for sex education, sexual health, and sexual rights for 55 years. SIECUS asserts that sexuality is a fundamental part of being human, one worthy of dignity and respect. We advocate for the rights of all people to accurate information, comprehensive sexuality education, and the full spectrum of sexual and reproductive health services. SIECUS works to create a world that ensures social justice inclusive of sexual and reproductive rights, and we view sex education as a vehicle for social change.

Mr. Barr's record on civil rights and privacy is abhorrent. During his 1991 Senate Judiciary Committee hearings, he plainly stated his belief that the constitutional right to privacy does not extend to abortion. This is particularly troubling given that *Roe v. Wade* is the law of the land, and the Attorney General of the United States is responsible for respecting and upholding the law. While serving as Attorney General in the 1990s, Mr. Barr asserted several times that anti-discrimination laws protecting LGBTQ are immoral. Furthermore, Mr. Barr played a significant role in ignoring science and medicine and abusing his power to promote hostility against HIV+ individuals throughout his tenure as Attorney General. Our nation desperately needs a new Attorney General who will base their decisions on facts and law, not on their own ideology or personal disdain for LGBTQ individuals.

While public support for the rights of LGBTQ individuals has grown drastically in recent years, Mr. Barr does not appear to have expanded his understanding of civil rights in the last two decades. In December 2018, he published an op-ed praising former Attorney General Jeff Sessions for his withdrawal of civil rights protections for transgender individuals. In the same op-ed, he expressed his support for the Department of Justice giving business owners a license to discriminate against LGBTQ individuals. Mr. Barr's decades of animus against civil rights for

all Americans – including LGBTQ Americans – makes him uniquely unqualified to serve once again as Attorney General.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our concerns regarding Mr. Barr's nomination. SIECUS joins our fellow advocates for sexual and reproductive health and rights in urging you to vote against the confirmation of William Barr for Attorney General.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'CHS', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end.

Christine Soyong Harley
Interim President and CEO
SIECUS