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Senator Chuck Grassley  
United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary  
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington D.C. 20510-6050

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee:

I am sorry that I cannot be with you today but thank you for allowing me join Senator Shelby in the introduction of Senator Jeff Sessions who has been nominated by the President-Elect to serve as our nation's next Attorney General. It is a great honor to put this statement before you on behalf of Senator Sessions, a fellow Alabaman and a person who I admire greatly.

I have known Senator Sessions since the early days of the Bush Administration and he has been a friend ever since. His character and leadership are reinforced by his respect for the extraordinary Constitution handed down to us by our Founders. He is a man who is committed to justice and knows that law and order are necessary to guarantee freedom and liberty.

Senator Sessions has been a tireless champion for the people of Alabama serving as one of it's Senators for over 20 years. He has also served as a federal prosecutor, the Alabama State Attorney General, and as a member of your distinguished Committee.

Honorable Senators, one of the original four cabinet positions created by our Founders was that of Attorney General. They believed that those who governed would value justice. But they also knew that justice would prevail because Americans could exercise and secure their rights through the judicial system. Protection of the rule of law and reigning in the arbitrary power of the State is at the core of democratic stability. And there is no more important role than Attorney General in assuring fealty to those principles. Senator Sessions has devoted his life to public service and to the protection of our core values. He will be diligent on behalf of all Americans and their rights.

I would like to close on a personal note. Senator Sessions and I were born not too many years apart in the state of Alabama at a time when America was not living up to its high-minded principles. Our state was a place of prejudice and injustice against the descendants of slaves. We, as a country, have worked hard and long to deal with our original birth defect of slavery and its aftermath. We have made progress but there is more to do. I respectfully say to you that those of us who lived through that dark time are among those most committed in deep and fundamental ways to overcoming it.

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Senator Sessions has worked hard to heal those wounds. He spearheaded the effort to award the Congressional Gold Medal to one of my personal heroes, Rosa Parks; he worked with Senator Booker to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the Foot Soldiers of the Civil Rights Movement in Selma; and he continually supports the commemoration of the 1961 Freedom Riders.

I know that Senator Sessions will uphold the laws of our great country and will work to ensure that every person here in the United States is given the voice that is deserved.

I am honored to support Senator Sessions today.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for holding today's confirmation hearing and thank you for your continued service to our great country.

Sincerely,



Condoleezza Rice