



July 14, 2026

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
Ranking Member, Committee on the
Judiciary
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Support for the Nomination of Todd Blanche to be Attorney General of the United States

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Durbin:

On behalf of the Tzedek Association, a national nonprofit organization that has worked for over a decade on criminal justice reform, religious liberty, and humanitarian advocacy—and which was proud to help lead the coalition that fought for passage of the First Step Act—I write in support of the nomination of Todd Blanche to serve as Attorney General of the United States.

Tzedek does not take positions on nominations lightly, and we certainly do not do so based on politics or partisanship. Rather, our support is grounded in our extensive firsthand experience working with Mr. Blanche over the past year and in our longstanding familiarity with his character, judgment, integrity, and commitment to public service. We have had the opportunity to observe both his leadership of the Department and the manner in which he exercises that leadership. Just as importantly, we have heard him articulate a vision of justice that consistently values accountability, public safety, redemption, and second chances—and then watched him translate those principles into action. That firsthand experience has convinced us that Mr. Blanche possesses, in equal measure, the integrity and the breadth of experience the Attorney General's office demands.

Implementation of the First Step Act

Perhaps no area better illustrates Mr. Blanche's leadership than the implementation of the First Step Act (FSA).

As one of the organizations working most closely with incarcerated individuals and their families, we previously witnessed firsthand the confusion that surrounded implementation of certain portions of the Act during its early years. Earned Time Credits were frequently misunderstood. Policies were interpreted inconsistently throughout the Bureau of Prisons (BOP). Staff often struggled to apply complicated statutory provisions uniformly, while incarcerated individuals and their families were left uncertain whether Congress's promised reforms would

ever be fully realized. Under Mr. Blanche’s leadership, we have witnessed remarkable operational progress and improved consistency throughout the Bureau.

He made those reforms because he understands, and believes in, its spirit. Speaking to our organization at a Tzedek event at the Library of Congress in August 2025, Mr. Blanche emphasized that the First Step Act was never about being “soft on crime,” but about doing justice the right way—holding offenders accountable while preparing those who have earned a second chance to successfully return to their families and communities. That philosophy has been reflected not merely in speeches, but in the Department’s actions under his leadership.

Indeed, as Deputy Attorney General and now Acting Attorney General, we have seen a marked shift toward clarity and consistency. He has been direct with us about the fact that the Department does not always get it right immediately—and about his commitment to fixing it when it doesn’t. One example illustrates the point concretely. In June 2025, his office directed every federal warden to maximize the use of home confinement for eligible inmates. When his team then reviewed Residential Reentry Centers to see whether that directive was actually being carried out, they found that of roughly 3,500 inmates in those centers, 2,800 had already earned eligibility for home confinement but had not yet been placed there because of bureaucratic delay. Rather than treating that as an acceptable margin of error, Mr. Blanche assembled a dedicated team to move those individuals back home to their families as quickly as possible. He also directed BOP to display each inmate’s actual statutory release date directly on their time-credit worksheet—a simple change, but one that had never been made, and one that lets both inmates and staff know exactly where they stand.

We have also seen how communication between Bureau leadership and institutions has improved. And the Bureau of Prisons’ 2025 directive to eliminate barriers to home confinement eligibility under the FSA and Second Chance Act was a meaningful step toward the law operating as Congress intended.

Furthermore, when Tzedek identified specific policy or operational problems that prevented eligible individuals from receiving the benefits Congress intended, Mr. Blanche and his team consistently demonstrated a willingness to listen and implement appropriate solutions. On more than one occasion, we personally witnessed him direct that issues be examined, policies clarified, and unnecessary bureaucratic obstacles removed rather than allowing problems to linger unresolved. Mr. Blanche himself put it directly: when the Department gets something wrong, organizations like ours are the ones who call—and, in his words, “we fix it.”¹ We found him to be thoughtful, accessible, and committed to getting the answer right rather than simply defending the status quo. Those qualities are indispensable in an Attorney General.

That responsiveness has strengthened confidence in the integrity of the FSA while ensuring that the law functions more closely to the manner Congress intended. It also reflects something about the man himself: faced with a problem that would have been easy to ignore or defer, he chose to fix it. We would come to see that same quality—doing the right thing because it is right, even when it would have been easier to leave the issue unresolved—throughout our dealings with him.

¹ Remarks of Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche, Tzedek Association event, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (August 12, 2025).

Modernizing the Bureau of Prisons

The BOP has likewise made extraordinary progress in many other ways during Mr. Blanche's tenure.

Expanded telephone access has enabled incarcerated individuals to maintain stronger relationships with their spouses, children, and parents. The recent nationwide deployment of secure inmate tablets has dramatically expanded access to educational programming, rehabilitative resources, and video communication with loved ones—representing one of the most significant technological investments in the Bureau's history. These are not merely operational improvements. Research consistently demonstrates that maintaining family relationships and increasing access to evidence-based programming reduce recidivism, improve institutional safety, and better prepare individuals for successful reentry into society. As Mr. Blanche has declared publicly, justice is not measured solely by punishment. It also includes preparing individuals to become productive members of society once they have paid their debt to society.² We have seen that philosophy reflected in these reforms.

We have also observed greater professionalism, accountability, and responsiveness throughout Bureau leadership. These improvements benefit correctional staff, incarcerated individuals, victims, and ultimately the communities to which individuals return.

A Collaborative and Principled Leader

One quality that has particularly distinguished Mr. Blanche is his willingness to engage directly with organizations like Tzedek working on the front lines of the justice system. Too often, government agencies unintentionally become isolated from the individuals and organizations with firsthand knowledge of how policies operate in practice. Mr. Blanche has taken the opposite approach.

Throughout our interactions, he has consistently welcomed constructive dialogue, carefully considered practical recommendations, and demonstrated an openness to improving policies when appropriate. We never found him to approach difficult issues with ego or preconception. Instead, he welcomed thoughtful disagreement, asked probing questions, and focused on reaching the correct result, including in matters involving prosecutorial judgment and discretion. Indeed, Mr. Blanche has often demonstrated what former Attorney General Robert Jackson famously described as the prosecutor's duty—not merely to secure convictions, but to ensure that justice is done. In our experience, that principle genuinely guides his decision-making.

We were especially encouraged by his public commitment to building upon the success of the First Step Act through additional reforms. Speaking at the Tzedek event last August, he closed his remarks by telling us plainly, "I think it's time for the 'Second Step Act. We can do more!'"³ That statement reflected a belief that the First Step Act was just the beginning, and that America can and must continue improving its criminal justice system while remaining fully committed to

² Id.

³ Id.

public safety. We share his belief that meaningful criminal justice reform and public safety are complementary objectives, and that continued improvements to sentencing policy, prison programming, supervised release, and reentry can both reduce recidivism and make our communities safer.

Confronting Antisemitism

At a time when antisemitism has reared its ugly head and reached deeply troubling levels throughout the United States, we have been encouraged by the Department's commitment under Mr. Blanche's leadership to confronting antisemitic violence, threats, and discrimination—including initiatives such as reviving the DOJ Task Force to Combat Anti-Semitism, launching a 15-city National Awareness & Action Tour, and establishing a new Antisemitism Advisory Committee to bring citizen expertise directly to the Attorney General's office.

For Jewish organizations such as Tzedek, this commitment is not an abstract policy issue. It reflects the Department's recognition that every American should be able to live, worship, study, and participate in public life free from intimidation or violence because of their faith. The Department's concrete efforts to strengthen enforcement, coordinate federal resources, and engage directly with affected communities have been important and welcome developments.

Protecting Religious Liberty

Mr. Blanche has also chaired the Department's Task Force to Eradicate Anti-Christian Bias and supported the work of the Religious Liberty Commission, efforts that—together with continued DOJ enforcement of RLUIPA on behalf of religious communities, including Orthodox Jewish and Amish communities facing land-use and zoning burdens—reflect his commitment to ensuring that the Department protects the religious liberty of Americans of every faith. This matters deeply to Tzedek and to the broader faith community we represent.

A Record of Integrity and Experience

Our familiarity with Mr. Blanche predates his current role in government service.

Mr. Blanche previously spent nearly a decade in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York and later built a respected practice as a partner at Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft. In those years, we personally saw him take on deserving cases pro bono—representing people who could not otherwise afford counsel—simply because he believed the cause was just, with no expectation of compensation or recognition. That kind of integrity is not manufactured for a confirmation hearing; it is the same integrity we have seen consistently, over many years and in every role he has held. Throughout his distinguished legal career, he earned a reputation for integrity, professionalism, sound judgment, and extraordinary preparation. Those who have worked opposite him and alongside him describe a lawyer who is thorough, direct, and fair—qualities we believe translate directly into the demands of leading the Department of Justice.

Few nominees bring this breadth of experience to the role: nearly a decade as a career federal prosecutor holding violent offenders accountable, years as defense counsel ensuring that every

client received a fair and vigorous defense, and now more than a year leading the Department itself as Deputy and Acting Attorney General. That combination—having stood on every side of the courtroom, and having led the Department in practice, not just in theory—is exactly the kind of seasoned judgment the office of Attorney General requires.

Conclusion

The Attorney General occupies one of the most consequential positions in our constitutional system. The office demands integrity, sound judgment, effective management, respect for the rule of law, and the ability to lead one of our Nation's most important institutions.

Based upon our firsthand experience over the past year—and our familiarity with Mr. Blanche dating back to his years in private practice—we believe he possesses the integrity, legal experience, judgment, and temperament required of the Attorney General of the United States. We have seen a leader who listens, follows through, welcomes constructive engagement, strengthens public safety, supports victims and families alike, protects religious liberty, combats antisemitism, and remains committed to a justice system that strives toward fairness, accountability, and rehabilitation. Just as importantly, we have seen that his public statements about justice are not merely rhetoric—they have consistently been reflected in the policies he has pursued and the manner in which he leads.

The Attorney General's office touches the lives of every incarcerated individual and family Tzedek serves. Mr. Blanche has earned our trust and confidence not only through the reforms he has advanced, but through the integrity with which he has carried them out—and we believe he will bring those same qualities to the Office of the Attorney General.

For these reasons, Tzedek Association respectfully urges the Committee to report Mr. Blanche's nomination favorably and the United States Senate to confirm him as the next Attorney General of the United States.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Respectfully,



Rabbi Moshe Margaretten
President, Tzedek Association