



**To: WSW Clients**  
**FROM: WSW Team**  
**DATE: January 11, 2017**

---

On January 11, 2017, the Senate Judiciary Committee questioned panelists for the second day of Senator Sessions confirmation hearing to serve as the Attorney General of the United States. This is a summary report from the second day of testimony.

**HIGHLIGHTS/KEY POINTS:**

The first panel (second overall) was a mixture of advocates for Sessions and opponents. The advocates primarily had a legal or law enforcement background while many of the opponents were from Civil Rights groups and focused specifically on the weaknesses of Senator Sessions record on Civil Rights issues and issues affecting victims, particularly women. The questions from Senators to the panelists primarily revolved around voting rights and civil rights with brief mentions of law enforcement sprinkled in. Having a third panel of testimony has never been done before, which Chairman Grassley stated at the beginning of the hearing, but it is at the request of Sen. Feinstein, Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee. The third panel primarily consisted of other Members of Congress that opposed Senator Sessions's nomination to the position of AG.

**NOMINEE INFORMATION & LINK TO TESTIMONY**

Chairman Grassley's opening statement

**MEMBER INTERESTS**

- Hatch (R-UT)- Enforcement of laws, prosecution of hate crimes, encounters with police and use of force, community policing, officer safety.
- Leahy (D-VT)- Undocumented immigrants, DACA, sexual assault.
- Graham (R-SC)- Focused on VRA and voter fraud and gave the example of how elections have been occurring in which there are more votes in a county than there are people, NAACP legislative score cards and how it is biased based on the political party of the legislator not substance of their beliefs.
- Durbin (D-IL)- Russia's role in the election, independence of attorney general, FBI investigations and attorney general involvement, abuse of power, special counsel, Voting Rights Act.

- Cornyn (R-TX)- Difference in political roles in different branches of government, role of the federal government in supporting local law enforcement, mental health and safe communities act, law enforcement training.
- Whitehouse (D-RI)- Law enforcement priorities, community relations, DOJ involvement in local law enforcement, level of attorneys at DOJ, punishment of career attorney following policy of previous administration during a new administration, hate crimes.
- Klobuchar (D-MN)- Freedom of press, C.O.P.S. program, voter fraud, voter turnout, role of the U.S. attorneys.
- Franken (D-MN)- Fraudulent votes, voting rights, wanted to discuss the topic of “omission of facts” mentioned by Senator Cruz but the chair did not allow it.
- Coons (D-DE)- Advancement of justice, voting rights, religious freedom.
- Cruz (R-TX)- Tyco case, testimony Mr. Cole had mentioned on franchising African American voters.
- Blumenthal (D-CT)- Voting rights, immigration.
- Hirono (D-Hawaii)- Voting rights, priority of civil rights, hate crimes, DREAMERS in the United States who want to serve in the military.
- Grassley (R-Iowa)- Independence to say no to the president, scope of communication of White House and DOJ, the difference how the attorney general would be with Sen. Sessions, law enforcement fatalities, voting rights, importance of the AG being independent from the Administration.
- Tillis (R-NC)- Immigration reform, abuse in the immigration system, illegal seizures and forfeitures.

### **Some Inside the Beltway Press Coverage of Hearing**

<http://www.npr.org/2017/01/11/509233543/how-democrats-are-using-confirmation-hearings-to-attack-trump>

[https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/11/us/politics/john-lewis-jeff-sessions-confirmation-hearing.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/11/us/politics/john-lewis-jeff-sessions-confirmation-hearing.html?_r=0)

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/jeff-sessions-has-made-his-case-to-be-the-attorney-general-now-the-senate-will-hear-from-supporters-and-detractors/2017/01/10/5683ce24-d796-11e6-9a36-1d296534b31e\\_story.html?hpid=hp\\_rhp-top-table-main\\_sessions-1225p%3Ahomepage%2Fstory&utm\\_term=.a3cc97d66242](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/jeff-sessions-has-made-his-case-to-be-the-attorney-general-now-the-senate-will-hear-from-supporters-and-detractors/2017/01/10/5683ce24-d796-11e6-9a36-1d296534b31e_story.html?hpid=hp_rhp-top-table-main_sessions-1225p%3Ahomepage%2Fstory&utm_term=.a3cc97d66242)

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/wp/2017/01/11/cory-booker-on-why-hes-testifying-against-jeff-sessions/?utm\\_term=.3bf91e3b3ee5](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/wp/2017/01/11/cory-booker-on-why-hes-testifying-against-jeff-sessions/?utm_term=.3bf91e3b3ee5)

**Panel II:**

The Honorable Michael Mukasey  
Former Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
Washington, DC

Mr. Oscar Vazquez  
Former DREAMER  
U.S. Veteran  
Fort Worth, TX

**Summary:** Discussed growing up as an illegal immigrant, the importance of DACA, and his pathway forward for illegal immigrants in the country.

Mr. Peter Kirsanow  
Commissioner  
United States Commission on Civil Rights  
Cleveland, OH

**Summary:** Discussed work with the Voting Rights Act and issues with civil rights.

Ms. Amita Swadhin  
Founder  
Mirror Memoirs  
Los Angeles, CA

**Summary:** Discussed the physical, sexual, and psychological abuse she faced growing up and mentioned how Trump has repeatedly sexually abused women. She is her for rape and sexual assault survivors because Sessions “downplayed” the actions of President-elect Trump, and Sessions voting against VAWA.

Ms. Jayann Sepich  
Co-Founder  
DNA Saves  
Carlsbad, NM

**Summary:** Discussed her daughter, Katy’s, brutal rape and murder and how there was DNA under her finger nails. Testified on behalf of the work Sessions has done in using forensic DNA in a more timely manner and with bipartisan support.

Mr. Cornell Brooks  
President and CEO  
NAACP  
Baltimore, MD

**Summary:** Discussed opposition to Sessions from the standpoint of civil rights groups, keeping law enforcement from non-discrimination. His support for mandatory minimums adversely affects individuals based on race and has not been an advocate against predatory policing.

Mr. Chuck Canterbury  
National President  
Fraternal Order of Police  
Washington, DC

**Summary:** Discussed full support for Sessions for his AG nomination. He is a partner to law enforcement as shown through his work as Alabama AG, and as a Senator. Officer safety is critical for Sessions and he has been the lead cosponsor of various pieces of legislation such as the Law Enforcement Safety Improvement Act. More recently he has helped with the passage of the Protecting Our Lives Act, which was signed into law by the president and it gives grants to state and local law enforcement agencies for training for active shooters. Sessions played a key role in the effort to pass the Fallen Hero Flag Act for officers killed in the line of duty. Officers are being assaulted and assassinated at the highest rates since the 1970s, and Sessions support of law enforcement resonates with the members of the committee. In 2001 Sessions addresses the issues of mandatory minimums for crack cocaine and disparity with powder cocaine, and he brokered the compromise of changing these laws finally in 2010, and reconciled the disparities between them.

Mr. David Cole  
Legal Director  
ACLU  
Washington, DC

**Summary:** Discussed how Sessions raises serious questions that his actions, words and deeds raise for civil rights and liberties. His conduct as a prosecutor and record as a senator are what raises concerns. Focused on prosecutorial misconduct of Sessions.

The Honorable Larry Thompson  
Former Deputy Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
Washington, DC

**Summary:** Discussed support for Sessions and his work on the Fair Sentencing Act and assistance with criminal justice reform.

**Panel III:**

The Honorable Cory Booker  
United States Senator  
State of New Jersey

**Summary:** Testified on behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus and urged his colleagues not to support Sessions for AG. He argued that Sessions does not have a good record with Civil Rights, franchising African Americans, and does not have the judgment to hold the position.

Mr. Willie Huntley  
Former Assistant United States Attorney  
Southern District of Alabama  
Mobile, AL

The Honorable John Lewis  
United States Representative  
5th District of Georgia

**Summary:** Discussed his time marching and fighting for Civil Rights.

The Honorable Jesse Seroyer  
Former United States Marshal  
Middle District of Alabama  
Montgomery, AL

**Summary:** Discussed Sessions time serving as AG for the state of Alabama and how he was a helpful figure for African Americans during his prosecutions as AG.

The Honorable Cedric Richmond  
United States Representative  
2nd District of Louisiana  
Chair  
Congressional Black Caucus

**Summary:** Senators that vote for Sessions are voting for taking the country back 50 years in history. Sessions record speaks for itself and he argues not to confirm him as AG.

Mr. William Smith  
Former Chief Counsel  
Administrative Oversight and the Courts Subcommittee  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Washington, DC

**Summary:** Sessions is fair and honest, and the innuendos and allegations raised during this time are irrelevant. He will enforce the laws whether he agrees with them or not.