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January 4, 2017

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Nomination Of Senator Sessions To Serve As Attorney General Of The United States

Dear Chairman Grassley and Senator Feinstein:

I write to endorse, enthusiastically, the nomination of Senator Jeff Sessions to serve as Attorney General of the United States. I urge the Senate to confirm Senator Sessions as promptly as possible.

I have known Senator Sessions, personally and professionally, for decades. I also have served in two Administrations in the Department of Justice, as Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legal Counsel in the Reagan Administration and as Solicitor General of the United States in the George W. Bush Administration. My federal government service also includes being a member of the President's Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board and, during the Obama Administration, a member of the Council of the Administrative Conference of the United States and the President's Commission on White House Fellowships. Based on these experiences, I am confident that Senator Sessions possesses the character and all the qualities necessary to be the Attorney General for all Americans.

Senator Sessions has repeatedly demonstrated the judgment and calm temperament that are necessary to this important position. He is himself a former official with the Department, and his knowledge of the Department, and his enthusiasm for its people, mission and values, will help ensure that he can lead the Department successfully.

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Senator Sessions will emphasize fairness in the Department, making sure that he has gathered the necessary facts from those in a position to know, and that he has consulted appropriately with those who are affected by the Department's operations. He will listen, and he will lead with integrity.

Of course, Senator Sessions also has a track record as a successful prosecutor, and during his tenure in the Senate he worked to help law enforcement and prosecutors fight crime. He has worked with Senators of both parties, including the late Senator Kennedy and Senator Durbin, on issues involving incarceration and sentencing.

Senator Sessions is a man of outstanding integrity and moral character, who has demonstrated respect for the Constitution and laws of the United States and for his country and fellow citizens.

Further, Senator Sessions understands the difference between serving as a legislator, and serving in the Executive Branch. He will vigorously enforce the laws Congress enacts. He will defend the Constitution, and protect the rule of law. Having served as a prosecutor at both the federal and state levels, he will respect principles of federalism in law enforcement, and work well with states that need federal resources and expertise to address local law enforcement issues.

As a lawyer who has devoted years of effort to litigating and vindicating the civil rights of our fellow gay, lesbian and transgender citizens, I recognize that people of good faith can disagree on legal issues. Such honest disagreements should not disqualify them from holding public office. In particular, I have no reservations about Senator Sessions' ability to handle these issues fairly, and in accordance with the law and to protect the civil rights of these and all of our citizens.

If confirmed, Senator Sessions will bring his integrity, work ethic, legal knowledge and experience to his new role at the Department. He will serve our Nation with distinction.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Respectfully,



Theodore B. Olson