

**REMARKS BY CLARISSA MARTÍNEZ-DE-CASTRO,
NCLR DEPUTY VICE PRESIDENT, DENOUNCING THE
NOMINATION OF SEN. JEFF SESSIONS AS
ATTORNEY GENERAL**

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Submitted
With Faith and Civil Rights Leaders
In Front of the U.S. Supreme Court

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Most of us have heard the moral: “a man is known by the company he keeps”. And that resonates very much today.

We’ve had plenty of serious policy disagreements with Mr. Sessions.

In 2012, he opposed the Violence Against Women Act.

He opposes civil rights for people with limited proficiency in English.

On nearly a dozen occasions, he has objected or opposed hate crimes protections for LGBTQ people.

He refuses to acknowledge the reality of voter suppression.

He has fanned the flames against refugees and Muslims, and was behind the ban we just saw unfold.

On immigration, he has aggressively opposed solutions the majority of Americans support, and has been the architect of the most extreme, anti-immigrant views and positions infecting Congress.

But we stand here today because this is deeper than a policy debate.

We stand here because it should be beyond debate that white nationalism or white supremacy cannot be the basis for any policy.

Yet, that seems to be the company Senator Sessions keeps.

These groups he associates with, such as FAIR or the Center for Immigration Studies, founded by publisher of racist tracts John Tanton, have been designated as extreme, white nationalists, or

hate groups, by the Anti-Defamation League, the Southern Poverty Law Center, and the Center for New Community.

He has spoken frequently at events hosted by those groups, endorsed their views, accepted their awards, and even hired their staff.

And what is most objectionable about Senator Sessions' is his long record of using his position as U.S. senator to legitimize these anti-immigrant extremists and hate groups, and to empower them with writing the proposals he advances in the Senate.ⁱ

Perhaps it's no wonder then that Mr. Sessions' Senate Judiciary Questionnaire excluded many of the speeches and appearances with these extremist groups.ⁱⁱ

The Attorney General is charged with protecting the rights and liberties of all Americans. But Senator Sessions' record shows that he does not see all people in our country as deserving of equal treatment.

And therefore, we do not see Senator Sessions as deserving of this position.

No one who has so closely engaged, honored, and endorsed the views of extremist, anti-immigrant hate groups should be entrusted with such authority.

Senators who ignore these warning signs are turning their back on a vast segment of the American family. It is their duty to provide the nation with a person committed to fight discrimination, not fuel it. Someone who will safeguard our highest values, not use his position to undermine them.

Sadly, on Mr. Sessions, the answer is no.

His track record reveals a pattern of hostility toward the very rights the attorney general is obligated to enforce.

ⁱ Although not directly addressed in this memorandum, Sen. Sessions has also evidenced close ties with so-called “Alt Right” media outlets that publish white nationalist views; see: Marge Baker, “Jeff Session’s Relationship With Breitbart, ‘The Platform’ for the White Nationalist Alt-Right, Should be Disqualifying,” http://www.huffingtonpost.com/marge-baker/jeff-sessions-relationships_b_13941372.html, January 3, 2017, accessed January 3, 2017.

ⁱⁱ See: <http://www.afj.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Sessions-Memo-Final.pdf>, accessed December 28, 2016.