

NAACP OPPOSES THE CONFIRMATION OF SENATOR JEFFERSON BEAUREGARD “JEFF” SESSIONS III TO SERVE AS ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES AND URGES PRESIDENT ELECT TRUMP TO NOMINATE SOMEONE WITH A PROVEN AND ESTABLISHED RECORD OF PROMOTING AND ENFORCING LAWS WHICH PROTECT THE CIVIL RIGHTS, VOTING RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES OF ALL AMERICANS Adopted by the NAACP Executive Committee of the National Board of Directors December 20, 2016

WHEREAS, on November 18, 2016, President-elect Donald Trump announced that upon taking office in January, 2017, he would nominate Senator Jefferson Beauregard “Jeff” Sessions III to serve as U.S. Attorney General; and

WHEREAS, throughout his careers as a U.S. Senator and before, when he served as the Attorney General for the State of Alabama, the US Attorney for the Southern District of Alabama, and the Assistant US Attorney for the Southern District of Alabama, Jeff Sessions was accused of demonstrating, through his words and his actions, a deeply concerning disregard for the basic civil and human rights and needs of the people he served and represented; and

WHEREAS, as came to light during his (failed) nomination by then-President Ronald Reagan to serve as a judge of the US

District Court for the Southern District of Alabama in early 1986, Jeff Sessions also has an expressed disregard for the NAACP or many of our partners in the struggle for civil rights, and justice for all. It was during his confirmation hearing that a Department of Justice Attorney testified that Sessions had referred to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) as "un-American" and "Communist-inspired" because they "forced civil rights down the throats of people." At the same confirmation hearing, another Department of Justice attorney testified that Sessions said that he believed the NAACP, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Operation PUSH and the National Council of Churches were all un-American organizations teaching anti-American values; and

WHEREAS, in response to a question during his 1986 confirmation hearing from then-U.S. Senator Joe Biden on whether he had called the NAACP and other civil rights organizations "un-American", Sessions replied "I'm often loose with my tongue. I may have said something about the NAACP being un-American or Communist, but I meant no harm by it"; and

WHEREAS, in his 19 years as a US Senator, Jeff Sessions, has supported the NAACP position on civil and human rights issues

through his votes an average of only 10.5% of the time, according to the NAACP federal legislative civil rights report cards; and

WHEREAS, as a U.S. Senator, Jeff Sessions has consistently voted against the “Hate Crimes Prevention Act”; he has consistently opposed safe, sane and sensible measures to stem the tide of gun violence including opposing expanded background checks to cover more gun purchasers, renewing the assault weapons ban and increasing the penalty for straw purchasers and gun traffickers; and

WHEREAS, he voted in favor of requiring federal “photo identification” from all voters every time a vote was called on the issue; Senator Sessions consistently voted against the reauthorization of the “Violence Against Women Act”; he voted against requiring states to address the Disproportionate Minority Confinement of incarcerated juveniles; Senator Sessions voted against the creation of a national commission charged with a thorough review of our federal criminal justice system, which looks at the origins of the criminal justice problems identified by the Commission, and offers suggested solutions to correct the issues identified; Senator Sessions has consistently opposed legislation to protect women’s health care by voting against Title X funding and supporting a ban on

all federal funds going to Planned Parenthood and its affiliates; and

WHEREAS, despite the fact that in 2006 Senator Sessions joined his colleagues in a unanimous vote in the US Senate in support of the reauthorization of portions of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, he is quoted as calling the 1965 Act “a piece of intrusive legislation” earlier in the year, as well as working initially to weaken section 5 of the Act until the Judiciary Committee Mark-up in which he decide not to move the pre-posted amendment; and

WHEREAS, in addition to opposing the nominations of NAACP-supported, Loretta Lynch to be Attorney General and that of NAACP-supported Debo Adegbile, to serve as the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights in 2014, as a U.S. Senator, Jeff Sessions has voted against the NAACP federal civil rights policy position on judicial nominations in most cases, including voting against Sonia Sotomayor, the first Latina to serve on the U.S Supreme Court, as well as Elena Kagen. He also voted against Robert Wilkins for the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals and Ronnie White (twice) for the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri. He voted to support controversial, alleged segregationist Judge Charles Pickering to the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals and in favor of John Roberts and Samuel Alito to the

US Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, In 2015, after the mass killings at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, a number of prominent politicians from both sides of the aisle led a call for the removal of the Confederate Battle Flag from public buildings, Senator Sessions said that calls to remove the Confederate flag are among efforts by “the left” to “delegitimize the fabulous accomplishments of our country.”

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the NAACP calls on President Elect Trump and all future Presidents to nominate individuals to serve as Attorney General who have a demonstrated commitment to the constitutional promises of civil rights, voting rights and civil liberties protection and enforcement for all, and an articulated respect and promise to promote the civil and human rights of all people, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, place of national origin, sexual preference or station in life; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NAACP oppose any individual for the position of Attorney General who has an established record of opposing the very civil rights, civil liberties, or human rights laws, policies, and programs for which he or she would be responsible for enforcing; and

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People opposes the confirmation of Senator Jeff Sessions to serve as Attorney General of the United States.