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Public News Service interviews Mary Pareja and Maryam Ahranjani, NM Law Professors Join Opposition to Sessions at U.S. Attorney General

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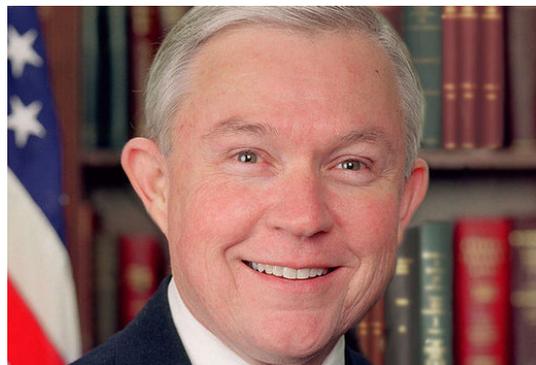
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NM Law Professors Join Opposition to Sessions at U.S. Atty. General

By Suzanne Potter

Public News Service
January 5, 2017

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. -- Half a dozen law professors from the University of New Mexico joined more than 1,000 of their colleagues from around the nation in protest of President-elect Donald Trump's nomination of Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., for U.S. Attorney General.



More than 1,100 law professors signed [a letter](#) asking members of Congress to reject Sessions' nomination during next week's Senate Judiciary Committee hearings. Assistant Law Professor Mary Pareja from the University of New Mexico Law School said she doesn't think Sessions would be the best person to lead the fight on anti-discrimination issues.

More than 1,100 law professors, including six from New Mexico, signed a letter this week protesting the nomination of Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., to be U.S. Attorney General. (Wikimedia Commons)

"I don't think he has a commitment to equal protection," Pareja said. "I think his specific past actions lead me to really doubt whether he would enforce the civil-rights laws in an equal way."

Sessions was rejected by the Senate Judiciary Committee in 1986 for a federal judgeship because of racially insensitive comments, which he denies having made.

The letter also mentioned his prosecution in 1985 of three civil-rights activists for voter fraud, a case he lost. As a U.S. Senator, Sessions has opposed the Voting Rights Act and supported Voter ID laws.

UNM Assistant Law Professor Maryam Ahranjani said she signed the letter because she finds Sessions' positions troubling on a range of issues.

"There are some concerns about his ability to be sensitive to racial inequality, about his support for the wall along the southern border of the United States, and his repeated opposition as a senator to legislative efforts to promote the rights of women and LGBTQ folks," Ahranjani said.

Sessions' supporters say he has a strong record on law and order, and they also point out that he voted to approve the nomination of Eric Holder, the first African American attorney general.

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