



Drug Policy Alliance Launching Campaign To “Just Say No” To Jeff Sessions

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The Drug Policy Alliance is launching a campaign to put the brakes on Alabama Republican Senator Jeff Sessions’ nomination for Attorney General.

The Drug Policy Alliance campaign includes a new video launched today on *The Root* that exposes Jeff Sessions’ appalling record on drug policy, civil and human rights, and criminal justice reform.

The Drug Policy Alliance video, created by award-winning filmmaker dream hampton, alternates between archival media footage of Jeff Sessions’ troubling racist words and actions, and DPA staff and allies talking about what Sessions would mean for drug policy and criminal justice. The video ends with a call to action asking people to call their Senators to reject Session for Attorney General.

“Jeff Sessions is a drug war extremist with a career-long history of racist comments and actions,” said Bill Piper, Senior Director of National Affairs at the Drug Policy Alliance. “In recent years, Sessions played a critical role in blocking efforts to reform sentencing policy, asset forfeiture, and marijuana laws. We will do everything we can to stop his confirmation.”

The last time Sessions faced a confirmation vote, in 1986, his nomination was voted down by the Republican-controlled Senate Judiciary Committee after they were confronted by Sessions’ extensive history of racist comments and actions. A black colleague testified that Sessions referred to him as “boy.” Sessions referred to the NAACP and other civil rights organizations as un-American groups that “forced civil rights down the throats of people.” He was accused of using his authority as a U.S. attorney to disrupt and prosecute civil rights activists who were registering African-Americans to vote. He even reportedly said he thought the KKK was “OK” until he found out its members smoked pot.

During his time in the U.S. Senate, Jeff Sessions has consistently supported efforts to expand the drug war and roll back civil rights. He was the chief opponent of recent bipartisan efforts to reduce sentences for drug offenses and has a track record of opposition to marijuana reform. He is likely to use his power as Attorney General to accelerate federal prosecutions for drug law

violations that carry draconian mandatory sentences and to interfere with state-legal marijuana and medical marijuana programs. Sessions is likely to expand the use of surveillance and policing against immigrant and marginalized communities. A Senate confirmation of Sessions would also position Sessions as a powerful foe of bipartisan criminal justice and sentencing reform efforts in Congress.

The Drug Policy Alliance is working with a broad coalition of organizations across the political spectrum to oppose Sessions. Last month, the Drug Policy Alliance organized ateleconference for reporters to discuss Sessions' record on civil and human rights, criminal justice reform, and drug policy. Representatives from *LatinoJustice*, the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, the Council on American Islamic Relations, the Cato Institute, the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference and the Drug Policy Alliance expressed their concerns about Sessions.

The Drug Policy Alliance is urging people to ask their Senators to oppose the Sessions nomination.

DPA's collaboration with award-winning director Dream Hampton is a follow-up to last year's video featuring Jay Z and the artwork of Molly Crabapple, *From Prohibition to Gold Rush: A History of the War on Drugs*.

The Sessions video launched today as part of a feature on *The Root* by Kirsten West Savali, the award-winning senior editor and writer who co-produced a widely acclaimed series on marijuana legalization in advance of last year's sweeping election victories.