



**STATEMENT OF  
THE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE ON CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

**UNITED STATES SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY**

**HEARING ON “THE NOMINATION OF THE HONORABLE PAMELA JO BONDI  
TO BE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES”**

**JANUARY 15, 2025**

Chair Grassley, Ranking Member Durbin, and members of the committee: The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights is submitting this statement for the record in today’s hearing to voice our strong opposition to the nomination of the Honorable Pamela Jo Bondi to serve as the next attorney general of the United States. We urge the Senate to reject Ms. Bondi’s nomination.

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights is the nation’s oldest and largest civil rights coalition with a diverse membership of more than 240 national organizations working to build an America as good as its ideals. Since our founding in 1950, The Leadership Conference has helped to secure the passage of every major civil rights law, from the Civil Rights Acts of 1957 and 1964, to the Americans with Disabilities Act, and many more.

Since the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) was created, it has served as our nation’s signature agency for the enforcement of our federal civil rights laws. It is of the utmost importance that the DOJ be led by an attorney general who is committed to defending the civil and human rights of all people and to ensuring the DOJ is fair and independent. In our democracy, the attorney general is the people’s lawyer, not the president’s lawyer, and has a sacred duty to enforce our nation’s laws without prejudice and with an eye toward justice. She must be seen by the public — every member of the public, from every community — as a fair arbiter of our legal system.

With the threats proposed in Project 2025, the America First Policy Institute’s “America First Agenda,” and the president-elect’s statements, the dangers posed to our multiracial democracy and to our fundamental civil and human rights are substantial. Unfortunately, a careful review of Ms. Bondi’s record has led us to conclude that she will not vigorously enforce our country’s civil rights laws as they were intended and that she will not uphold the agency’s longstanding independence from undue political influences.

Ms. Bondi’s record is profoundly troubling in several respects, as we have detailed below with a few examples:

## Lack of Independence

Our next attorney general must serve all of us, not the whims of one person. Ms. Bondi’s history of unflinching loyalty to President-elect Donald Trump suggests she possesses neither the independence nor the integrity to serve as attorney general. Her vigorous defense of Trump during his first impeachment,<sup>1</sup> her support of his election fraud claims,<sup>2</sup> and her accusations that those prosecuting Trump are “weaponizing the legal system”<sup>3</sup> render her unable to lead the department, which relies on adherence to the rule of law above all else.

## Voting Rights

*Efforts to Overturn the 2020 Election:* Ms. Bondi’s shameful actions and statements following the 2020 election ought to, on their own, disqualify her from serving as attorney general of the United States. As a chief lawyer for Trump in the 2020 election, Ms. Bondi fueled unfounded and dangerous lies about voting conspiracies and election fraud. On the day after Election Day, she appeared at a Trump campaign press conference<sup>4</sup> with former New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani and falsely claimed that Trump had won Pennsylvania, despite the fact that nearly 1 million absentee ballots had yet to be counted.<sup>5</sup> She challenged these valid absentee ballots in Pennsylvania, calling them “fake.”<sup>6</sup> Claiming that dead people had received ballots, Ms. Bondi appeared on Fox News the next day, stating that “We do have evidence of cheating” and “we are not going anywhere until they declare we won Pennsylvania.”<sup>7</sup> In fact, Trump lost Pennsylvania in 2020, and Ms. Bondi’s false allegations of voter fraud were resoundingly rejected by both the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and the U.S. Supreme Court.<sup>8</sup>

*Anti-Voting Rights Litigation at the America First Policy Institute:* Since 2021, Ms. Bondi has chaired the Center for Litigation at the America First Policy Institute (AFPI), and she serves as co-chair of AFPI’s Center for Law and Justice. Under her leadership, AFPI has filed a number of lawsuits that would disenfranchise a significant number of voters. For example, in 2024, AFPI sought to grant a local Georgia election board official the authority to unilaterally delay or deny the certification of elections.<sup>9</sup> A Republican-appointed state court judge denied AFPI’s claim, stating that “Election superintendents in Georgia have a mandatory fixed obligation to certify election results” and concluding that “[i]f election superintendents were, as plaintiff urges, free to play investigator, prosecutor, jury, and judge and so —

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<sup>1</sup> Aaron Rugar, [Pam Bondi’s been a punchline during the impeachment trial. But her role speaks to something important](#), VOX (Jan. 30, 2020).

<sup>2</sup> Beth Reinhard, [How Pam Bondi boosted Trump’s election fraud claims in a key swing state](#), THE WASHINGTON POST (Dec. 16, 2024).

<sup>3</sup> Sadie Gurman & C. Ryan Barber, [Trump Picks Pam Bondi for Attorney General After Gaetz Withdraws](#), THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (Nov. 22, 2024).

<sup>4</sup> [Trump Campaign News Conference in Philadelphia](#), C-SPAN (Nov. 4, 2020).

<sup>5</sup> [Trump Still Leads in Pa. as Suburbs Finish Count, Philly Adds Votes](#), NBC PHILADELPHIA (Nov. 4, 2020).

<sup>6</sup> Ken Meyer, [Pam Bondi Hypes ‘Fake Ballots,’ ‘Evidence of Cheating’ in Pennsylvania Vote; Provides None to Fox & Friends](#), MEDIAITE (Nov. 5, 2020).

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> See *Kelly v. Commonwealth*, 240 A.3d 1255 (Pa. 2020); Amy Howe, *Justices won’t stop Pennsylvania from certifying election for Biden*, SCOTUSBLOG (Dec. 8, 2021).

<sup>9</sup> [Adams v. Fulton County Board of Elections and Registration](#), 24CV011584 (GA Superior Ct., Oct. 14, 2024).

because of a unilateral determination of error or fraud — refuse to certify election results, Georgia voters would be silenced.”<sup>10</sup> Because 60 percent of Fulton County residents are people of color, Ms. Bondi’s argument would have disenfranchised huge numbers of voters of color.

In 2024, AFPI filed a lawsuit seeking to block President Biden’s Executive Order (EO) 14019, which promoted a whole of government approach to integrating non-partisan voter registration activities throughout agency programs, consistent with the bipartisan National Voter Registration Act of 1993.<sup>11</sup> In this lawsuit, AFPI falsely claimed that, among other things, the EO was “structured to increase voting in 2024 by noncitizens, likely including a significant number of illegal aliens.”<sup>12</sup> Trump-appointed Judge Matthew Kacsmayk denied AFPI’s motion for a temporary restraining order on the ground that the AFPI had no standing and had provided no direct evidence to support its claims.<sup>13</sup>

*Voter Disenfranchisement:* Ms. Bondi’s troubling record on voting rights extends to her tenure as Florida’s attorney general. She sat on the state Clemency Board, which is responsible for reinstating the civil rights of those with a felony conviction, among other things. In 2011, she voted to change the state clemency laws to make it more difficult for people who had completed criminal sentences to have their voting rights reinstated, rolling back years of bipartisan reform.<sup>14</sup> These changes included a requirement to petition the board for reinstatement and imposed a minimum five-year waiting period before their applications were considered.<sup>15</sup> At the time, she wrote: “I fundamentally and philosophically oppose the concept of the automatic restoration of civil rights.”<sup>16</sup> When a federal court held this process unconstitutional in 2018, Bondi appealed the order<sup>17</sup> and secured a reversal.<sup>18</sup>

## LGBTQ Rights

As Florida attorney general, Ms. Bondi defended an amendment to the state’s constitution that banned the recognition of same-sex marriages, even after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a similar federal law was unconstitutional.<sup>19</sup> Ms. Bondi publicly justified her decision to continue defending the Florida amendment by arguing that it would be a “dereliction of duty” to not defend it. Despite stating that “I never said I don’t like gay people...that’s ridiculous” in another interview, she argued in court that recognizing same-sex marriages in other states would “impose significant harm” to the people of Florida.<sup>20</sup> Nearly a decade

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<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

<sup>11</sup> *Am. First Pol’y Inst. v. Biden*, No. 2:24-CV-152-Z, 2024 WL 4920765 (N.D. Tex. Sept. 15, 2024).

<sup>12</sup> Complaint, [America First Policy institute et al v. Joseph R. Biden et al](#), 2:24-CV-152-Z (N.D. Tex., July 11, 2024).

<sup>13</sup> *Supra* note 11.

<sup>14</sup> Pam Bondi, [Upholding the Rule of Law](#), TAMPA BAY TIMES (Mar. 16, 2011).

<sup>15</sup> *Id.*

<sup>16</sup> Brent Kallestad, [Official says rights restored too easily](#), ASSOCIATED PRESS (Feb. 24, 2011).

<sup>17</sup> Matt Dixon, [Bondi appeals federal court order to overhaul voter restoration process](#), POLITICO (Apr. 4, 2018).

<sup>18</sup> [Appeals court grants Gov. Scott. Cabinet reprieve on revamping felon voting rights process](#), TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (Apr. 25, 2018).

<sup>19</sup> *United States v. Windsor*, 570 U.S. 744 (2013).

<sup>20</sup> Gregory Krieg, [CNN’s Anderson Cooper grills Florida AG Bondi over gay rights record](#), CNN (June 14, 2016).

later, there has never been any “significant harm” as predicted, and instead, the constitutional rights of millions of people — to have a choice in who you love and who you marry — have been recognized.

## Census

As Florida attorney general, Ms. Bondi joined 10 other state attorneys general and two governors urging the U.S. Department of Commerce to include a citizenship question on the decennial census.<sup>21</sup> While attempts to add such a question to the 2020 Census stalled due to the Supreme Court’s ruling that the administration’s reason for adding the question was pretextual, adding the question through approved procedures would also prove problematic. Such a move, which has again been proposed as part of Project 2025, would further sow fear and distrust in households across the country — particularly the millions of mixed-status households that can include native born citizens, foreign born citizens, and noncitizens — as people navigate an anti-immigrant climate and rhetoric. It would also undermine an accurate count, feed into government distrust, distort representation and federal funding flows, and increase the cost of conducting the decennial census, as more effort would be needed to conduct the count mandated in Article 1 and the 14th Amendment of the Constitution.

## Health Care

*Reproductive Rights:* As Florida attorney general, Ms. Bondi defended state laws that required counseling and mandatory waiting periods for those seeking an abortion, imposing an undue burden on pregnant people. This included a law mandating that clinics counsel patients on the alternatives to and effects of an abortion — which was later declared unconstitutional<sup>22</sup> — and a law imposing a required 24-hour waiting period.<sup>23</sup> She also joined Florida to amicus briefs that supported restrictions on abortion and contraception in several other cases, which included challenging a mandate that required employee health care plans to include coverage for emergency contraception,<sup>24</sup> defending Alabama laws that restricted any health clinic whose services include abortion from operating near schools and restricted the techniques that physicians were allowed to use,<sup>25</sup> and supporting a Texas ban on the standard procedure for abortion care after about 14-15 weeks.<sup>26</sup>

*Affordable Care Act:* While Ms. Bondi served as Florida’s attorney general, the state led a lawsuit with 26 other states that sought to declare the Affordable Care Act (ACA) unconstitutional, which would have upended major health insurance reforms for millions of people who had previously been unable to obtain coverage. With Florida regularly leading the nation in people enrolled in a health insurance plan under the ACA,<sup>27</sup> Ms. Bondi’s actions threatened the health and wellness of millions of Floridians alone. The U.S.

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<sup>21</sup> David A. Lieb, [GOP attorneys general support citizenship question on census](#), AP NEWS (Apr. 15, 2018).

<sup>22</sup> *Fulwider v. Senior*, No. 4:16-cv-00765 (Fla. N. Dist. Ct. 2016).

<sup>23</sup> *Gainesville Woman Care, LLC v. State*, 210 So. 3d 1243 (Fla. 2017).

<sup>24</sup> *Beckwith Elec. Co. v. Sebelius*, 960 F. Supp. 2d 1328 (M.D. Fla. 2013).

<sup>25</sup> *West Alabama Women’s Center v. Miller*, No. 17-15208 (11th Cir. 2017).

<sup>26</sup> *Whole Woman’s Health v. Paxton*, 972 F.3d 649, (5th Cir. Tex. August 21, 2020).

<sup>27</sup> Craig Pittman & Christine Sexton, [Florida leads the nation \(again\) In Obamacare enrollment](#), FLORIDA PHOENIX (Jan. 8, 2025).

Supreme Court ultimately rejected this argument in 2012.<sup>28</sup> In 2018, Ms. Bondi signed Florida on to another constitutional challenge to the ACA, reportedly without the direction of then-Governor Rick Scott.<sup>29</sup> This case was ultimately thrown out by the Supreme Court on procedural grounds with the Court ruling that the plaintiffs did not have standing to bring the case.<sup>30</sup>

### **Politicization of the Federal Government**

Ms. Bondi is the principal legal advisor for AFPI, which states in its “America First Agenda” that “[a]gencies should be free to remove employees for any nondiscriminatory reason, with no external appeals.”<sup>31</sup> This position would go even further than Project 2025’s egregious proposal by eliminating civil service protections for nearly all federal workers and forcing them to serve the president’s political aims instead of the public interest. Given Ms. Bondi’s longtime fidelity to Trump and her work to further his political agenda through her work at AFPI, there is significant cause for concern that if she is confirmed to this position, the DOJ would terminate career lawyers just for disagreeing with the Trump administration’s policies.

### **Conclusion**

Ms. Bondi lacks the commitment to defending the core tenets of our democracy and the civil and human rights of all people. Indeed, her active participation in and support of Trump’s efforts to overturn the 2020 election ought to be disqualifying in itself. Her actions raise serious doubts about her devotion to the rule of law, her professional legal judgment, and her ability to run a law enforcement agency without undue influence from Trump. It is worth noting that several other lawyers associated with this effort have been disciplined and even disbarred for their actions.<sup>32</sup>

Meanwhile, as cited above, other aspects of her record raise significant doubts about her ability and willingness to act as the nation’s top enforcer of federal civil rights laws, particularly the Voting Rights Act — our most important civil rights law. For these reasons, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights strongly urges the Senate to reject her confirmation.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. If you have any questions, please contact Jesselyn McCurdy, executive vice president for government affairs at The Leadership Conference, at [jesselynmccurdy@civilrights.org](mailto:jesselynmccurdy@civilrights.org).

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<sup>28</sup> *National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius*, 567 U.S. 519 (2012).

<sup>29</sup> Gary Fineout (@fineout), X (Jun. 13, 2018, 6:33pm), <https://x.com/fineout/status/1007028220414308360>.

<sup>30</sup> *California v. Texas*, 593 U.S. 659 (2021).

<sup>31</sup> [Reform the Civil Service to Create Accountability in the Bureaucracy](#), America First Agenda (2024).

<sup>32</sup> Kyle Cheney, [Another Trump-aligned lawyer has law license suspended for role in 2020 scheme](#), POLITICO (Oct. 31, 2024).