



January 28, 2025

**OPPOSE THE NOMINATION OF THE HONORABLE PAMELA JO BONDI
TO BE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES**

Dear Senator:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, 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, and the undersigned 93 organizations, we write to express strong opposition to the nomination of the Honorable Pamela Jo Bondi to serve as the next attorney general of the United States.

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) was created more than 150 years ago in part to enforce the Reconstruction Amendments aimed at abolishing slavery, ensuring equal protection under the law, and securing voting rights for Black Americans. Today, the department continues its historic role as the nation's signature agency for the enforcement of our federal civil rights laws and for upholding the principles of equality and justice that are foundational to American democracy. This enduring mission of the DOJ requires that anyone who leads the department have demonstrated their commitment 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 fair and independent.

This is particularly important given the known threats to our multiracial democracy and our civil rights proposed in Project 2025, the America First Policy Institute's "America First Agenda," and the president's previous term in office and past statements. Unfortunately, after a careful review of Ms. Bondi's record, and after hearing her responses to questions before the Senate Judiciary Committee, we have concluded 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.

To start, Ms. Bondi's active participation in and support of President Trump's efforts to overturn the 2020 election ought to be disqualifying. Her record and her responses in the hearing reflect many positions that render her unfit for this role, including her inability to be independent and her troubling record on voting rights, LGBTQ rights, access to health care, the census, environmental justice, and immigration.

Lack of Independence & Politicization of the Justice Department

Our next attorney general must serve all of us, not the whims of one person. Ms. Bondi's history of unflinching loyalty to Trump suggests she possesses neither the independence nor the integrity to serve as

attorney general. For example, her vigorous defense of Trump during his first impeachment,¹ her support of his false election fraud claims,² and her accusations that those prosecuting Trump are “weaponizing the legal system”³ render her unable to lead the department, which relies on adherence to the rule of law above all else.

In addition, 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.”⁴ 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.

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 conference⁵ 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.⁶ She challenged these valid absentee ballots in Pennsylvania, calling them “fake.”⁷ 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.”⁸ 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.⁹

During the hearing, Senator Padilla asked Ms. Bondi: “Do you have any evidence of election fraud or irregularities in the 2020 election?”¹⁰ After he repeatedly asked, yes or no, whether she had evidence, she

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

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

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

⁴ [Reform the Civil Service to Create Accountability in the Bureaucracy](#), America First Agenda (2024).

⁵ [Trump Campaign News Conference in Philadelphia](#), C-SPAN (Nov. 4, 2020).

⁶ [Trump Still Leads in Pa. as Suburbs Finish Count, Philly Adds Votes](#), NBC PHILADELPHIA (Nov. 4, 2020).

⁷ *Supra* note 2.

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ 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).

¹⁰ [The Nomination of the Honorable Pamela Jo Bondi to be Attorney General of the United States](#), Senate Judiciary Committee (Jan. 15, 2025).

refused to answer.¹¹ When asked whether she would retract her previous statements about Trump winning Pennsylvania in 2020, she again would not answer, only offering to share what she claims she saw in Pennsylvania.¹² As Senator Padilla importantly noted, “Your job will be to protect voters and election workers, not to undermine and dox them.”¹³ It is deeply troubling that on multiple occasions her remarks harkened back to her role as a chief lawyer for Trump in the 2020 election, when Ms. Bondi fueled the big lie and attempted to undermine our democracy. It is noteworthy that Ms. Bondi immediately descended on Philadelphia the day after the election, as it was one of several cities with large Black populations — in addition to Atlanta, Detroit, and Milwaukee — where Trump and his lawyers focused their attempts to disenfranchise Black voters.¹⁴

Indeed, during the hearing, Ranking Member Durbin asked Ms. Bondi whether Trump lost the 2020 election, and Ms. Bondi would only say that “President Biden is the president of the United States” and that Trump was “overwhelmingly elected in 2024.”¹⁵ Senator Hirono followed up on this question, and Ms. Bondi once again would not answer, simply saying that “Joe Biden is the president of the United States.”¹⁶ As Senator Hirono said of Trump’s election loss, “it’s disturbing that you can’t give voice to that fact.”¹⁷ Underscoring these concerns, Ms. Bondi also falsely claimed there was a “peaceful transition of power” in 2020.¹⁸ An attorney general nominee who considers armed violence against Congress and the disruption of our democracy as “peaceful” has no place at the DOJ.

It is disqualifying that Ms. Bondi actively participated in and supported Trump’s efforts to overturn the 2020 election. 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. Notably, several other lawyers associated with this effort have been disciplined and even disbarred for their actions.¹⁹

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.²⁰ 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

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² *Id.*

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ Juana Summers, [Trump Push To Invalidate Votes In Heavily Black Cities Alarms Civil Rights Groups](#), NPR (Nov. 24, 2020).

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ *Id.*

¹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹ Kyle Cheney, [Another Trump-aligned lawyer has law license suspended for role in 2020 scheme](#), POLITICO (Oct. 31, 2024).

²⁰ [Adams v. Fulton County Board of Elections and Registration](#), 24CV011584 (GA Superior Ct., Oct. 14, 2024).

superintendents were, as plaintiff urges, free to play investigator, prosecutor, jury, and judge and so — because of a unilateral determination of error or fraud — refuse to certify election results, Georgia voters would be silenced.”²¹ 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 1993.²² 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.”²³ Trump-appointed Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk 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.²⁴

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.²⁵ These changes included a requirement to petition the board for reinstatement and imposed a minimum five-year waiting period before their applications were considered.²⁶ At the time she wrote: “I fundamentally and philosophically oppose the concept of the automatic restoration of civil rights.”²⁷ When a federal court held this process unconstitutional in 2018, Ms. Bondi appealed the order²⁸ and secured a reversal.²⁹

In 2025, as the nation prepares to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Bloody Sunday and the landmark Voting Rights Act that the DOJ is charged with enforcing, it is unacceptable that the department could be led by someone with such a disturbing record on the right to vote — the right that so many brave Americans throughout our country’s history risked their lives, and died, to secure.

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

²¹ *Id.*

²² *Am. First Pol’y Inst. v. Biden*, No. 2:24-CV-152-Z, 2024 WL 4920765 (N.D. Tex. Sept. 15, 2024).

²³ Complaint, *America First Policy Institute et al v. Joseph R. Biden et al*, 2:24-CV-152-Z (N.D. Tex., July 11, 2024).

²⁴ *Supra* note 21.

²⁵ Pam Bondi, *Upholding the Rule of Law*, TAMPA BAY TIMES (Mar. 16, 2011).

²⁶ *Id.*

²⁷ Brent Kallestad, *Official says rights restored too easily*, ASSOCIATED PRESS (Feb. 24, 2011).

²⁸ Matt Dixon, *Bondi appeals federal court order to overhaul voter restoration process*, POLITICO (Apr. 4, 2018).

²⁹ *Appeals court grants Gov. Scott, Cabinet reprieve on revamping felon voting rights process*, TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (Apr. 25, 2018).

unconstitutional.³⁰ 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.³¹ Nearly a decade 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.

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 unconstitutional³² — and a law imposing a required 24-hour waiting period.³³ 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,³⁴ 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,³⁵ and supporting a Texas ban on the standard procedure for abortion care after about 14-15 weeks.³⁶

In the hearing, Senator Booker asked Ms. Bondi about access to mifepristone and whether she would commit to continuing the DOJ’s efforts to defend the FDA’s judgment in lawsuits challenging access to mifepristone.³⁷ Despite its widespread news coverage and a major case before the Supreme Court last term, she said she had not been aware of this before she and Senator Booker previously spoke.³⁸ She said “I will look at that policy. I am personally pro-life. I have always been pro-life.”³⁹ While she stated that her personal beliefs will not affect her work,⁴⁰ her record on reproductive rights is serious cause for concern, especially when the attorney general has significant discretion.

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

³⁰ *United States v. Windsor*, 570 U.S. 744 (2013).

³¹ Gregory Krieg, [CNN’s Anderson Cooper grills Florida AG Bondi over gay rights record](#), CNN (June 14, 2016).

³² *Fulwider v. Senior*, No. 4:16-cv-00765 (Fla. N. Dist. Ct. 2016).

³³ *Gainesville Woman Care, LLC v. State*, 210 So. 3d 1243 (Fla. 2017).

³⁴ *Beckwith Elec. Co. v. Sebelius*, 960 F. Supp. 2d 1328 (M.D. Fla. 2013).

³⁵ *West Alabama Women’s Center v. Miller*, No. 17-15208 (11th Cir. 2017).

³⁶ *Whole Woman’s Health v. Paxton*, 972 F.3d 649, (5th Cir. Tex. August 21, 2020).

³⁷ *Supra* note 10.

³⁸ *Supra* note 10.

³⁹ *Supra* note 10.

⁴⁰ *Supra* note 10.

ACA,⁴¹ Ms. Bondi's actions threatened the health and wellness of millions of Floridians alone. The U.S. Supreme Court ultimately rejected this argument in 2012.⁴² In 2018, Ms. Bondi signed Florida on to another constitutional challenge to the ACA, reportedly without the direction of then-Governor Rick Scott.⁴³ 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.⁴⁴

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.⁴⁵ 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.

Immigration

Throughout the nomination hearing, Ms. Bondi would not denounce Trump's dangerous, anti-immigrant rhetoric. For example, when Senator Hirono asked about whether she agrees with Trump's dehumanizing statement that "illegal immigration is poisoning the blood" of our nation,⁴⁶ Ms. Bondi claimed "I am not familiar with that statement."⁴⁷ Senator Padilla followed up on this question, asking her, yes or no, whether she agrees with this statement.⁴⁸ She again did not address Trump's comments or disavow the statement at face value.⁴⁹ Trump's continued use of this rhetoric has been roundly criticized for repeating language used by Adolf Hitler, and it is unacceptable that Ms. Bondi would not condemn it.

In the hearing, Senator Padilla also noted that Ms. Bondi, during their previous one-on-one meeting, didn't seem to be familiar with the Citizenship Clause of the 14th Amendment.⁵⁰ When asked during the

⁴¹ Craig Pittman & Christine Sexton, [Florida leads the nation \(again\) In Obamacare enrollment](#), FLORIDA PHOENIX (Jan. 8, 2025).

⁴² *National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius*, 567 U.S. 519 (2012).

⁴³ Gary Fineout (@fineout), X (Jun. 13, 2018, 6:33pm), <https://x.com/fineout/status/1007028220414308360>.

⁴⁴ *California v. Texas*, 593 U.S. 659 (2021).

⁴⁵ David A. Lieb, [GOP attorneys general support citizenship question on census](#), AP NEWS (Apr. 15, 2018).

⁴⁶ Jill Colvin, [Trump says he didn't know his immigration rhetoric echoes Hitler. That's part of a broader pattern](#), AP News (Dec. 27, 2023).

⁴⁷ *Supra* note 10.

⁴⁸ *Supra* note 10.

⁴⁹ *Supra* note 10.

⁵⁰ *Supra* note 10.

hearing what the clause says, Ms. Bondi stated that “I’m here to answer your questions, I’m not here to do your homework and study for you.”⁵¹ She then acknowledged that the 14th Amendment addresses birthright citizenship.⁵² When asked whether she believes birthright citizenship is the law of the land and whether she will enforce it, she said that “I will study birthright citizenship.”⁵³ It is unacceptable that the attorney general nominee is both unfamiliar with birthright citizenship and unwilling to say whether she believes it’s the law. There are millions of Americans whose livelihoods this jeopardizes. The continued rhetoric and policy proposals, like the draconian ones proposed in Project 2025, should not be perpetuated by anyone who leads the DOJ.

Conclusion

At this critical time for our democracy, Ms. Bondi lacks the independence needed at the DOJ to build trust in the department and to ensure the fair enforcement of our nation’s civil rights laws. Her record and responses to questions during the hearing underscore that she lacks the commitment to defending the core tenets of our democracy and the civil and human rights of all people. People in America deserve better, and they deserve an attorney general who will vigorously work for them, enforce our federal civil rights laws, and build a more just, multiracial democracy. We strongly urge the Senate to oppose her confirmation.

Sincerely,

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
Accountable.US
Advancement Project
The Advocates for Human Rights
Advocates for Trans Equality
AFL-CIO
African American Policy Forum
Alliance for Justice
American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
Americans for Financial Reform
American Humanist Association
American Oversight
Americans United for Separation of Church and State
Andrew Goodman Foundation
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - AAJC
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
Center for Constitutional Rights
Center for Responsible Lending
CenterLink: The Community of LGBTQ Centers

⁵¹ *Supra* note 10.

⁵² *Supra* note 10.

⁵³ *Supra* note 10.

Color of Change
Constitutional Accountability Center
Court Accountability Action
DemCast USA
Demos
Defend the Vote
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)
Drug Policy Alliance
Earthjustice Action
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities
Equal Justice Society
Equal Rights Advocates
Faiths for Safe Water
Feminist Majority Foundation
FFRF Action Fund
Friends of the Earth
Government Information Watch
Greenpeace USA
Hispanic Federation
Human Rights Campaign
Indivisible
Interfaith Alliance
Japanese American Citizens League
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
Lawyers for Good Government
League of Conservation Voters
MALDEF
Matthew Shepard Foundation
MomsRising
NAACP
NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.
NBJC
National Abortion Federation
National Association of Social Workers
National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI)
National Council of Jewish Women
National Employment Law Project
National Employment Lawyers Association
National Fair Housing Alliance
National Health Law Program
National Homelessness Law Center
National Immigration Law Center
National Network of Abortion Funds
National Organization for Women
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Urban League
National Women's Law Center

Nathaniel R. Jones Foundation
People For the American Way
People's Parity Project
Planned Parenthood Action Fund
Popular Democracy in Action
Project On Government Oversight
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
Public Citizen
Reclaim Our Democracy
Reproaction
Reproductive Freedom for All
The Secular Coalition for America
SEIU
The Sikh Coalition
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
Southern Poverty Law Center
Stand Up America
Stop AAPI Hate
Supermajority
Take Back Christianity
UnidosUS
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity
Voices for Progress
Western States Center
The Workers Circle