

July 31, 2018

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(b)(6)

Attorney General Jefferson B. Sessions  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Attorney General Sessions:

As a person of faith, I appreciate your department's respect for the millions of Americans who are guided through life by a deep longing for grace, kindness and decency. Personally I have encountered very little hostility or mockery for practicing my faith, but I sympathize with those who have.

On the other hand, many of my fellow Americans have been stung, sometimes mortally, by pernicious bigotries emanating from institutions of faith. Gay Americans in particular suffered decades of violent persecution, leaving scars too often dismissed by segments of America's religious community. This injustice does not justify disdain and hostility toward religion, which is a current and historical force for good. But mere hostile attitudes are not illegal.

So how is it warranted that federal resources be devoted to forming a Religious Liberty Task Force, dispatched to combat offensive but legal activity? We need dialogue, we need reconciliation and we need empathy. But instead your justice department has decided we need extra law enforcement. What is the goal here?

Yours in citizenship,

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[Redacted signature block]

Cc: President Trump

July 30, 2018

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Voting

Jeff Sessions  
Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530-0001

RE: No Separation between State and Religion - Unconstitutional

Mr. Sessions:

The Department of Justice is now going to set up a department, noted by you as the 'Religious Liberty Task Force.' This is unconstitutional and not a separation of State and religion. It comes under the guise of religious and political freedom, again, it is not this is a ploy to gain the religious right's vote – this is un-American and surely unethical.

The enactment of this 'force' is a way to sure-up votes for Trump in the next election (and you to remain in office) since his personal life includes behaviors that contradict most all religions (e.g., adultery, lying, and covering up affairs under his position, prostitution and paying women for sex)).

Trump is unstable and noted in a book by 27 psychiatrists and mental health workers to be psychologically pathological; I would surmise you are also. Trump continues to create harm to people, especially people of different nationalities and color, and operates in a dictatorial manner. If you read how Hitler gained his power, Trump and yourself, are following the exact script.

You and Trump will be exorcised out of office, it is only a matter of time.

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Attorney General Jefferson B. Sessions  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001

August 7, 2018

Dear Attorney General Sessions:

I am writing to you regarding your announcement about the formation of a Religious Liberty Task Force. Religious freedom as enshrined in the establishment clause of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution is a foundation that it is vital to uphold in this country.

As an ordained minister, I know firsthand the necessity of keeping church and state separate, and firmly uphold freedom of conscience.

As an interfaith minister, I have worked across boundaries with individuals & families that come from a variety of interreligious, intercultural, and interracial backgrounds.

As a hospice chaplain, I have had the great blessing to work with many diverse communities, fueled by my belief that everyone is entitled to an all-embracing, non-judgmental, uplifting spiritual base of support.

The beauty of God's creation is reflected in each & every person - including those who do not believe in a higher power. Based on this premise, the community I serve includes people of all races, nationalities, creeds, religions, gender identities, and sexual orientations.

Your remarks made last week have me deeply troubled about your actual understanding of what religious liberty for all means! Quite frankly, I am extremely concerned that you seek to allow and endorse discriminatory behavior in the name of religion - and especially one religion in particular. True religious liberty stands for inclusive pluralism, not for the exclusive priority of the Christian faith.

While I hope this task force will examine the broad spectrum of religious liberty for all people, the remarks shared at this week's Religious Liberty Summit have me concerned that both same-sex marriage - and how some religious people can deny service to LGBTQ persons in the name of that liberty - is a main focus. I sincerely pray that this is not the case!

Religious liberty should never allow for discrimination based on who people are. While it may be difficult for many to accept that same-sex marriage is now legal, the rights of same-sex couples and the LGBTQ community must be respected - as the rights of all people should! The risk of not honoring that is great, and we are already seeing that in some areas: doctors refusing care to the children of LGBTQ parents; refusal of housing to LGBTQ couples; being fired or not promoted because someone is gay, etc.

The Bible has been used repeatedly to justify all types of discrimination – and religion throughout the ages has been misused to exclude people, rather than to include them in God’s open and Divine embrace. As was already determined by people who marched, and still march, for civil rights, the lunch counter - literally and figuratively - is a place where all should be welcome.

People from all over the world have come to live in this country that has long been a leader in human rights. As you gather this Religious Liberty Task Force, I ask that you engage the services and support of LGBTQ clergy; a group of theologians and pastors that is racially and ethnically diverse - including women and men from Native American traditions, Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, and Humanist traditions, among others; as well as laity. And I strongly suggest that you employ the services of groups such as The Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, and The Interfaith Alliance, both non-partisan groups that are well-versed in the intersection of religious liberty and public policy.

In hope for the United States of America – and for all its people,

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September 29, 2018

Attorney General Jeff Sessions  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530-0001



Dear Attorney General Sessions:

I watched the video of you announcing the Religious Liberty Task Force. As a Christian, I feel compelled to respond. (Please note that I tried sending this letter by facsimile back in August and was saddened to learn that all your facsimile numbers are now blocked.)

I have always said Merry Christmas to my Christian friends. My Muslim and Jewish friends say Merry Christmas to me. I say Happy Hanukkah and a Blessed Eid to my friends who are not Christian. And sometimes I say Happy Holidays to people I don't know as well, but most often I ask them if they celebrate Christmas, which often leads to a more in-depth conversation. To have these conversations seems polite to me, and it certainly furthers the understanding of Americans together!

In my church, we have several same sex couples and a transgender youth. Everyone, Republican and Democrat, embraces them all, because they bring joy to the church, and they are active in the choir and in the many ministries.

I'm sorry if your faith and your parish make you feel like you are under attack. Imagine how non-Christians must feel with this administration promoting hatred, distrust and tribalism, the very things that many came here to escape. I encourage you to look to the words of Jesus Christ as a moral compass for opening your heart to people of all beliefs, and toward healing this country.

Sincerely,

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**From:** Wood, Jeffrey (ENRD)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 7, 2017 11:18 AM  
**To:** Bylund, Jeremy (OASG)  
**Cc:** Snow, Corinne (ENRD); McArthur, Eric (OASG)  
**Subject:** Re: Religious Liberty Working Group

Ok. Might be good for Eric Grant to participate as well. Because of the Indian Country issues, I would also recommend adding someone like (b) (5) (b) (6), a career attorney, and serves as our ENRD front office counsel on tribal issues, unless OTJ otherwise has representatives on the working group.

On Nov 7, 2017, at 7:59 AM, Bylund, Jeremy (OASG) <[jbylund@jmd.usdoj.gov](mailto:jbylund@jmd.usdoj.gov)> wrote:

Dear Jeff,

Per Rachel Brand's memorandum to all litigating components, I have been tasked with coordinating litigating positions that implicate the AG's memorandum on religious liberty. I have been recruiting participants for that working group from the various components. Corinne reached out to me to coordinate some ENRD litigation. (b) (5)

Also, do you have any other individuals that you would recommend to serve on the working group?

Best,

Jeremy M. Bylund  
Deputy Associate Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
(202) 514-0123

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**From:** Tucker, Rachael (OAG)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 28, 2018 8:30 PM  
**To:** Wood, Jeffrey (ENRD)  
**Subject:** Re: religious liberty working group

He is added!

On Mar 28, 2018, at 7:41 PM, Wood, Jeffrey (ENRD) <[JWood@ENRD.USDOJ.GOV](mailto:JWood@ENRD.USDOJ.GOV)> wrote:

Hi Rachael, could you add Eric Grant, our DAAG overseeing ENRD Appellate and ENRD Indian Resources? Those are the places where we see Religious Freedom issues arise most often. He clerked for Justice Thomas and, as an interesting side note of relevance to the topic, is a (b) (6). He would be a great addition to this brain trust. Thanks! Jeff

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**From:** Tucker, Rachael (OAG)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 27, 2018 7:20 PM  
**To:** Bylund, Jeremy (OASG) <[jbylund@jmd.usdoj.gov](mailto:jbylund@jmd.usdoj.gov)>; Percival, James (OASG) <[jpercival@jmd.usdoj.gov](mailto:jpercival@jmd.usdoj.gov)>; Treene, Eric (CRT) <[Eric.Treene@crt.usdoj.gov](mailto:Eric.Treene@crt.usdoj.gov)>; Pickett, Bethany (CRT) <[Bethany.Pickett@crt.usdoj.gov](mailto:Bethany.Pickett@crt.usdoj.gov)>; Lichter, Jennifer (OLP) <[jlichter@jmd.usdoj.gov](mailto:jlichter@jmd.usdoj.gov)>; Sturgill, Lowell (CIV) (b) (6); Lucas, Brinton (CIV) (b) (6); Wood, Jeffrey (ENRD) <[JWood@ENRD.USDOJ.GOV](mailto:JWood@ENRD.USDOJ.GOV)>; Forrester, Nate (OLC) (b) (6); Clarke, Conor (OLC) (b) (6)  
**Subject:** religious liberty working group

Hi all,

It's time for a brainstorming session. I'd like to get this group together to talk about goals for the coming months (b) (5) to advance this cause. I'll throw out next Friday, 4/6, at 11:30am. I'll send a calendar invite. Let me know if you have a conflict and we can move it around.

Thanks very much,

Rachael

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**From:** Timmons, Mollie (OASG)  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 4, 2018 12:34 PM  
**To:** Wood, Jeffrey (ENRD)  
**Cc:** Grant, Eric (ENRD); Snow, Corinne (OASG)  
**Subject:** RE: Religious Liberty Task Force

Hi Jeff,

Of course. I will add him now.

Best,  
Mollie

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**From:** Wood, Jeffrey (ENRD)  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 4, 2018 12:32 PM  
**To:** Timmons, Mollie (OASG) <mtimmons@jmd.usdoj.gov>  
**Cc:** Grant, Eric (ENRD) <EGrant@ENRD.USDOJ.GOV>; Snow, Corinne (OASG) <csnow@jmd.usdoj.gov>  
**Subject:** Religious Liberty Task Force

Mollie,

I will be on DOJ travel the date of the task force meeting (10/18). I'd like Eric Grant to stand in my place. Could you add him to the calendar invite?

Thanks,  
Jeff

Jeffrey H. Wood  
Acting Assistant Attorney General  
Environment and Natural Resources Division  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Room 2141  
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001  
(202) 514-2701  
[jeffrey.wood@usdoj.gov](mailto:jeffrey.wood@usdoj.gov)

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**From:** Hall, Jeffrey (OASG)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 16, 2018 5:25 PM  
**To:** Hunt, Jody (CIV); Flores, Sarah Isgur (OPA); Gore, John (CRT); Engel, Steven A. (OLC); Wood, Jeffrey (ENRD); Mokha, Harpreet S. (CRS); Dummermuth, Matt (OJP)  
**Cc:** LaCour, Alice S. (CIV); Sturgill, Lowell (CIV); Kupec, Kerri (OPA); Grant, Eric (ENRD); Forrester, Nate (OLC); Treene, Eric (CRT); Lichter, Jennifer (OLP)  
**Subject:** Religious Liberty Task Force Meeting

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Participants in the Religious Liberty Task Force,

At our first meeting on Thursday, we would like each component to be ready to present a brief overview of the type of work they do that is relevant to religious liberty and any initiatives, in-progress projects, or major pending cases that they may have. Each such presentation need only last 3-5 minutes at most. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,  
Jeff

Jeffrey A. Hall  
Senior Counsel to the Associate Attorney General  
United States Department of Justice  
Washington, DC 20540