

U.S. Attorney's Report to the District

The New Attorney General

In late April, the Department of Justice got a new boss. Loretta Lynch was sworn as the 83rd Attorney General of the United States. Serving as Attorney General for the final two years of the President's second term is not an easy assignment, but few persons are more qualified for the job.

I knew Loretta Lynch over 25 years ago, when we were both young associates at a large law firm in New York. She was two years ahead of me, and I did not know her well, but even then the elements of her professional persona -- tough but gracious, thoughtful and dignified -- were obvious. She left the firm for a U.S. Attorney's Office two years before I did, and was subsequently appointed by President Clinton as the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York. She later spent eight years back in private practice before being appointed U.S. Attorney for the same district for a second time by President Obama.

In 2010, we were both appointed to the Attorney General's Advisory Committee. I served on the committee for three years, while she rose to chair it, and we also collaborated on an office administration subcommittee. Loretta Lynch is profoundly committed to the mission of the U.S. Department of Justice and to the women and men who carry out that mission. Last month she called a roomful of attorneys, paralegals and other support staff in Sacramento just to express her appreciation for their work in completing a series of challenging mortgage fraud cases. She has deep credibility with the attorneys and law enforcement agencies of the Department of Justice because she has experienced the agency and walked the walk in a way that few other Attorneys General have: as a line prosecutor, a supervisor, a U.S. Attorney (twice), and as chair of the prior Attorney General's national advisory committee.

Attorney General Lynch's top priority is the same as that of her predecessors: safeguarding the homeland from attacks, both foreign and domestic, including cyber-attacks. She has put a particular emphasis on combatting human trafficking, an area that has also been a priority in this district. However, she may be most visible during her term as Attorney General in working to improve relationships between law enforcement agencies and the people they serve, particularly communities of color.

Attorney General Lynch is particularly well-positioned by experience and personality to make a positive contribution on this critical issue. She is the first African American woman to serve as Attorney General, and she was raised by a family in North Carolina that was firmly engaged in the struggle for racial equality. As a prosecutor, she personally handled high profile civil rights cases, including the prosecution of police officers in Brooklyn who were convicted of brutally assaulting a Haitian immigrant. At the same time, over the course of her career in law enforcement, she built a reputation as a tough and uncompromising prosecutor, earning the respect of federal, state and local officers in combatting violent crime and narcotics trafficking in urban New York.

U.S. Attorneys across the country were extremely pleased when one of our own was confirmed as Attorney General. It is my particular honor to serve in a Department of Justice headed by Loretta Lynch.

If you would like to communicate with our office, contact the main number in Sacramento, or submit a suggestion by clicking on the button below. Thank you.

United States Attorney

Benjamin B. Wagner