

**Testimony of the Reverend Dr. Clarence G. Newsome
Before the US Senate Judiciary Committee on Behalf of
Attorney Loretta Elizabeth Lynch
Nominee for the Position of US Attorney General
Washington, DC
January 29, 2015**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Clarence G. Newsome. I am president of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center based in Cincinnati, Ohio. It is my pleasure and honor to appear before you to support the nomination of Attorney Loretta Elizabeth Lynch for the position of United States Attorney General.

I have known Loretta virtually all of her life. Our family relationships cover a period of 40 or more years. Her family has been associated with several branches of my family by way of the Baptist Church connection and the network of educators in the great state of North Carolina. Her grandfather was a highly regarded and respected clergyman; the same can be said of her father and her brother, both of whom have been distinguished leaders at the state and national levels for some time. For many years her father was a key leader in the life of the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and the National Baptist Convention, USA. Her brother continues in that tradition of leadership even now.

Her father and I have been ministerial colleagues since the 1970s. It was my privilege to teach her brother during the years that I served on the Duke Divinity School faculty. I have been able to maintain a warm personal association with her mother, an esteemed church leader and educator in her own right, for decades. Through her father, brother and mother and mutual family friends I have been able to stay abreast of Loretta's impressive and remarkable rise to a position of preeminent leadership in the life of our nation.

Loretta is the product of one of the most outstanding families in the state of North Carolina. To the degree that virtue counts in our society, I am bold to say that she is the product of one of the most outstanding families in the United States of America. The members of the Lynch family are known for their exemplary character, integrity, excellent achievement, civic-mindedness, commitment to the common good, and deep and compelling sensitivity to the well-being of all people.

Over the years it has been my privilege to witness the development and emergence of the best of who we are as a nation in the person of Loretta. In the religious, educational and social circles in which our families have moved she has had a reputation for being stellar in everything she has done. As a teenager she

drew the admiration of adults, and more significantly, her peers as well. She stood out among them without alienating herself from them. She was as approachable then as she is now. Even then she enjoyed a reputation for being level headed, balanced in her thinking and wise in her judgments. She evidenced a level of maturity that was out of the ordinary but only in those ways that garner the respect of young and old alike.

As a student during her pre-college years she performed at such a high level that it only seemed natural that she would attend and graduate from Harvard University and Harvard Law School. In fact, her career trajectory is consistent with the extraordinary intellectual ability and prowess, discipline and even courage she demonstrated during her youth. Early on she dared to dream to become the best of the best, and she has accomplished this in the field of law and jurisprudence. As her professional record shows, she has become the best of the best without qualification.

In the way that her career has taken shape I can discern several attributes that are worth noting at a time such as this. First of all, she is an informed independent thinker who listens well and studies hard. Second, she has the capacity to maintain the strength of her own convictions. Third, she is morally

grounded and highly principled. Fourth, she acts decisively and judiciously. And fifth, she is a public servant of the highest order, the type that works well with others to bring about good results with positive outcomes.

As the president of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, my portfolio consists of teaching, promoting, advocating and championing freedom throughout the nation and the world in accordance with the American ideal of freedom. As a grateful citizen of a nation whose freedom is secured and protected by the rule of law, I take great comfort in the thought that Loretta is trustworthy and honest to the core of her being; and that she would exercise her responsibilities objectively and without bias. She would discharge her duties honorably and faithfully. She would demonstrate an unequivocal commitment to the spirit and the letter of the law. She would personify the nobility, righteous aspirations and enduring promise of a self-governing people.

Thank you.