

STATEMENT OF JAMES M. COLE  
NOMINEE TO BE DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL  
UNITED STATES SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
JUNE 15, 2010

Chairman Leahy, Ranking Member Sessions -- thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee today. I am honored by President Obama's nomination of me to be the Deputy Attorney General, and I look forward to describing for you the goals I hope to accomplish if confirmed by the Senate.

At the outset, permit me to thank my family members for their support, today and throughout my career.

If confirmed, I will be returning to the Department where I served for thirteen years as a career prosecutor. In a sense, this would be for me like returning home.

My earlier service at the Department spanned the terms of three Presidents. I had the privilege of working for five Attorneys General, both

Republicans and Democrats. My thirteen years in the Department were filled with some of the most rewarding experiences of my professional career. It was a privilege to work with and learn from people who strove every day to uphold the highest traditions of excellence in protecting the American people and upholding the rule of law.

I joined the Department in 1979, through the Honors Graduate Program straight from law school, and spent my early years as a trial attorney in the Criminal Division. I developed expertise in public corruption law, and prosecuted, among others, a federal judge, a federal prosecutor, and a Member of Congress. Eventually I served as Deputy Chief of the Public Integrity Section. I was proud to work in this field because it was – and still is – important to me that the American people know that public officials are serving the public interest and not their own.

In 1992, I went into private practice where I have engaged in both civil and criminal litigation. I have also been called upon to help companies establish or improve programs that monitor compliance with laws and regulations. For example, I worked closely with Senator Danforth to

develop document retention policies for Arthur Andersen after the Enron investigation uncovered serious deficiencies.

In 1995 I served for fourteen months as Special Counsel to the United States House of Representatives Committee on Standards of Official Conduct. I led an investigation into allegations that a high-ranking member had improperly used tax-exempt money for partisan purposes and had provided misleading information to the Committee. I take pride in the fact that my investigation led to a bipartisan resolution of the matter even though it took place in a very partisan environment. Our recommendations were approved by an overwhelming majority of the full House.

In 2005, I was selected by the Justice Department and the SEC to serve as an independent monitor at the insurance company AIG. I was first tasked by court order to look at five years of transactions to determine if AIG assisted any of its clients to “cook the books” through the use of complex transactions. That work led to another appointment in 2006, in which I developed financial reporting and regulatory compliance programs. The company resisted some of my efforts, but I insisted on tough measures.

Should I have the honor of becoming Deputy Attorney General, my first and foremost duty will be to help the Attorney General keep Americans safe. We must continue to do everything in our power to protect Americans from the threat of terrorism, consistent with the rule of law. We must use all available lawful means to protect our national security, including, where appropriate, military, intelligence, law enforcement, diplomatic, and economic tools and authorities. And we must strongly defend this country from attacks by terrorists, consistent with our core values.

I would also work closely with the Attorney General to reinvigorate the Department's traditional law enforcement mission. The Department of Justice must redouble its efforts to combat financial fraud, mortgage fraud and health care fraud, to enforce civil rights laws and to thoroughly investigate and prosecute environmental crime. I believe that my experiences in the public and private sectors have equipped me well to address these problems, which are so costly to all Americans.

I very much look forward to serving with an Attorney General whom I respect and with whom I have a strong working relationship. I share the Attorney General's goals of protecting the American people against both

foreign and domestic threats; ensuring the fair and impartial administration of justice; assisting state and local law enforcement; and defending the interests of the United States. I look forward to doing all that I can to achieve these goals.

Perhaps most of all, I look forward, with your support, to coming home and again serving with the fine men and women at the Justice Department.