
Warren Silenced For Speaking of Sessions' Racist Past at Attorney General Confirmation Hearing

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Senator Elizabeth Warren is banned from further comments after reading a letter explaining his actions against the civil rights movement.

Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren was shut down by the Senate Tuesday for her questioning of Donald Trump's controversial pick for attorney general, Jeff Sessions. The Alabama Republican has continually been called out for racist views, something that Warren focused on during the confirmation hearing.

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Warren quoted a 1986 letter from civil rights activist Coretta Scott King, wife of Martin Luther King Jr., in which she opposed Sessions' unsuccessful nomination for to a position as a federal judge. In the letter, King said that Sessions used his power as a federal prosecutor to "chill the free exercise of the vote by black citizens."

"If confirmed, he will be given a life tenure for doing with a federal prosecution what the local sheriffs accomplished twenty years ago with clubs and cattle prods ... I believe his confirmation would have a devastating effect on not only the judicial system in Alabama, but also on the progress we have made toward fulfilling my husband's dream," other sections of King's letter read.

Warren was warned by Montana Senator Steven Daines that reading the letter would be breaking the rules set for the hearing. After she continued, she was banned by Republican

Senate leader Mitch McConnell for breaking rule 19: “No Senator in debate shall, directly or indirectly, by any form of words, impute to another Senator or to other Senators any conduct for motive unworthy or becoming a Senator.”

McConnell’s ruling was then backed up by a senate vote, with Republican Senators voting on party lines. After a failed appeal from the Democrats, Warren was barred from speaking again during the nomination hearing, where a vote is expected Wednesday night.

“I will not be silent about a nominee for attorney general who has made derogatory and racist comments that have no place in our justice system,” Warren later tweeted.

Angered by the ruling, Democrats argued that other Republican Senators had been allowed to continue talking for far worse offenses and that technically Warren’s criticism was not aimed at a nomination for the position of attorney general.

Back in 1986, Sessions was accused of making racist comments while serving as a U.S. attorney in Alabama. He called a Black assistant U.S. attorney “boy” and the NAACP “un-American” and “communist-inspired.”

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At the start of Sessions confirmation hearing in January, protesters from anti-war organization Code Pink and two others dressed in Ku Klux Klan robes entered the chamber for the hearing. Sessions, however, has denied any links to supporting the Ku Klux Klan in the past as “damnably false.”

Sessions has also enthusiastically backed Trump's border wall with Mexico, promised to prosecute illegal immigrants who repeatedly enter the country and questioned the Obama administration's decision to shield immigrants from deportation. He is also reported to be one of the key figures behind Trump’s immigration, counter-terrorism and trade policies.
