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TESTIMONY

of

Chuck Canterbury

National President

Grand Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police

on the

**Nomination of William P. Barr to be the next
Attorney General of the United States**

before the Senate Committee on the Judiciary

16 January 2019

—BUILDING ON A PROUD TRADITION—



Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Feinstein, and distinguished Members of the Committee on the Judiciary. My name is Chuck Canterbury, National President of the Fraternal Order of Police. I am the elected spokesperson of more than 345,000 rank-and-file police officers—the largest law enforcement labor organization in the United States.

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to offer the strong and unequivocal support of the Fraternal Order of Police for the nomination of William P. Barr to be the next Attorney General of the United States.

In my previous appearances before this Committee, I have been proud to offer the FOP's support for a number of nominees with the expectation that they would be good leaders that would serve our country honorably and effectively. In this case, however, there is no need to speculate whether or not Mr. Barr would make a good Attorney General because he already was a good Attorney General in the Administration of President George H.W. Bush. He had the experience, the knowledge and the ability to lead the U.S.

Department of Justice then and he certainly does now.

Mr. Barr's career of public service began as a clerk for a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia and a short tenure in the Reagan White House. He then joined the Bush (41) Administration as Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legal Counsel in 1989. President Bush took note of his leadership, integrity and commitment to law enforcement and promoted him to Deputy Attorney General in 1990.

In 1991, Mr. Barr was named Acting Attorney General and was immediately faced with a public safety crisis. At the Talledega Federal prison, more than 100 Cuban inmates, awaiting transportation back to their country, staged a riot and took seven Bureau of Prisons and three Immigration and Naturalization employees hostage. In the first hours of the standoff, General Barr ordered the Federal Bureau of Investigation to plan a hostage rescue effort.

The Cuban inmates demanded that they be allowed to stay in the United States and released one of the hostages. Over the course of

the nine-day siege, it was clear the negotiations were not progressing and the inmates threatened to begin killing their hostages. General Barr ordered the FBI to breach the prison and rescue the hostages. The hostages were freed without any loss of life and incident was ended because of General Barr's decisive action.

Following the successful resolution of this incident, President Bush nominated him to be U.S. Attorney General. The Committee on the Judiciary reported his nomination unanimously and the Senate confirmed him as the 77th Attorney General on a voice vote.

Through his service and his actions, he demonstrated that he was the right man for the job. The FOP believe he is the right man for the job again today.

Two years ago, just days after his inauguration, President Trump issued three Executive Orders on law enforcement and public safety. The first directed that the Federal government develop strategies to “enhance the protection and safety” of our officers on the beat. The others created a Task Force on Crime Reduction and Public Safety and for the development of a national strategy to combat

transnational criminal organizations trafficking in human beings, weapons and illicit drugs.

Mr. Chairman, during his tenure as Attorney General, he directed and oversaw a similar transformation at the Justice Department by refocusing its resources by making crimes of violence—particularly gang violence—a top priority for Federal law enforcement. I submit to this Committee that Mr. Barr is the perfect person to complete the work begun by General Sessions with respect to focusing Federal resources to fight violent crime because he not only has done it before, he has done it before as the Attorney General of the United States.

President Trump has clearly made law enforcement and public safety a top priority. His nomination of William Barr to be the next Attorney General demonstrates that these priorities have not changed. We know Mr. Barr's record and abilities, as well as his prior experience in the office. The FOP shares his views and we are confident that Mr. Barr will, once again, be a stellar "top cop."

We believe the President has made an outstanding choice in Mr. William P. Barr to return to public service as the Attorney General of the United States. The FOP proudly offers our full and vigorous support for this nominee and we urge the Judiciary Committee to favorably report his nomination just as they did in 1991.

Thank you again of the opportunity to testify and I am happy to answer any of your questions.