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## Editorial | Letters

# Sessions unfit for attorney general

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Many thanks to U.S. Sen. Mazie Hirono for her commitment to vote “No” on U.S. Sen. Jeff Sessions’ nomination for U.S. attorney general. Hirono’s vigorous questioning in the Judiciary Committee has helped to make explicit the extent to which Sessions is a threat to many of our nation’s most cherished ideals of democracy.

The Justice Department is required, among other things, “to enforce the law” and “ensure fair and impartial administration of justice for all Americans.” Sessions’ past statements and record of hostility to civil rights and voting rights in particular indicate that as attorney general, he would fail to fully uphold the Voting Rights Act, other key civil and voting rights legislation, and immigrant rights.

Based on that record alone, Sessions is simply unfit for the job.

And as this week’s events demonstrate, we need more hearings before Senate confirmation in order to judge whether Sessions would counter overreach by President Donald Trump, especially with respect to civil rights and immigration.

**R. Elton Johnson, III**

*Chairman, Common Cause Hawaii*

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**Wrong to label Trump a ‘liar’**

I find anti-Trumpers' spate of derogatory descriptors for President Donald Trump tiresome — "liar" being one of the more popular — and inappropriate.

A liar is someone who knows the truth but intentionally states an untruth with the intent to deceive; for example, "you can keep your doctor" and "a video inspired the Benghazi attack."

To make his points, Trump often exaggerates or speaks prematurely, but he does not intend to hide the truth.

Anti-Trumpers calling Trump a liar is the height of hypocrisy. Many let former President Barack Obama, a master of prevarication, get away unscathed for repeatedly telling many an important lie. These same people take literally and nit-pick Trump's every utterance, crying "liar" like the proverbial wolf.

Why not show a little creativity? Instead of "liar," how about, "Oh you know, it's just old Donald"?

### **Geoff Boehm**

*Waikiki*

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### **Gabbard talks pro-Assad line**

U.S. Rep. Tulsi Gabbard said that supposed U.S. efforts to overthrow Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad were misguided because such efforts bolster groups associated with al-Qaeda and ISIS ("[U.S. must stop helping terrorists fighting Syria's government,](#)" *Star-Advertiser, Island Voices, Jan. 26*).

Her commentary sought to discredit rebels resisting the unquestionably brutal Assad regime by portraying them as terrorists with little to no support from the Syrian people.

It is little wonder that Gabbard seems to believe that the Syrian people widely back Assad, despite the fact that his forces have reportedly killed upwards of half a million civilians during the Syrian civil war.

She was accompanied by Elie and Bassam Khawam, brothers who were officials in the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, a paramilitary organization that fights alongside Syrian government forces. The Khawams likely gained Gabbard an audience with Assad himself.

Gabbard has, wittingly or not, become a mouthpiece for the Syrian government and an advocate in Washington for its agenda, espousing pro-Assad propaganda to the readers of this newspaper.

**Christopher Ford***Kailua*

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**UNLV sports has generous donors**

The Las Vegas Review-Journal recently reported that three benefactors pledged \$3 million toward a new football training facility for the University of Nevada-Las Vegas.

Don't we have the same in Hawaii? I'm a longtime University of Hawaii alumnus and don't recall any high-profile contributions over the years.

**Raymond Fontanilla***Las Vegas*

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**Kauai dairy farm will harm area**

Often, wealthy mainland people move to Hawaii and want to make changes — some great, but some very bad and selfish.

A case in point is Pierre Omidyar's plans to create Hawaii Dairy Farms on Kauai, upwind of the Grand Hyatt Kauai Resort & Spa in the pristine Mahaulepu area.

This project will be unprofitable due to logistics and the wholesale cost of milk. Group 70 International has produced a lengthy, difficult-to-absorb environmental impact statement supporting the dairy.

Still, there are too many risks and no guarantees that Kauai will be protected from environmental and economic damage that may occur. Drinking-water wells serving the Poipu/Koloa area could be affected.

Locals could lose their jobs due to visitors going elsewhere because of the odors.

I ask that Pierre and Pam Omidyar respect the beauty of this special area and, if they must, build the dairy somewhere else where the risks are less.

**Tom Bartlett***Koloa, Kauai*

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