

NATIONAL DISTRICT ATTORNEYS
ASSOCIATION,

Alexandria, VA, October 3, 1997.

Hon. ORRIN G. HATCH,
Chairman, Senate Committee on the Judiciary,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN HATCH: I strongly support the nomination of Bill Lann Lee as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights for the Department of Justice.

Through his work as a Civil Rights attorney, Bill Lann Lee is, I believe, well versed in the problems confronting law enforcement at the community level and in particular in the problems facing our police departments in regard to their relationships with the communities they serve. Crucial to his success as Assistant Attorney General will be his ability to minimize destructive conflict between state, local and federal resources to achieve the goal of bringing peace and harmony to our communities.

In my discussion with him on his goals in his nominative role, Mr. Lee has indicated his strong dedication to seeking out nonconfrontational and alternative methods of resolving the festering problems besetting our police. Moreover, he recognizes that many complaints are without merit and based in perception rather than fact. He is eminently aware that he must make a viable and continual contribution to fostering a stronger working relationships between law enforcement and all segments of our communities to achieve the goal of ending both actual and perceptions of police misconduct.

During our discussions we also addressed how best to accomplish the investigative efforts, involving both local and federal interests, in cases involving police misconduct. He has pledged to work with local leaders to develop protocols to combine efforts to ensure effective use of assets, a fuller development of the pertinent facts and a timelier resolution. This alone would be a lasting contribution if brought to fruition.

I believe that as the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, he will remain fully cognizant of the need and expectations of the people of the United States to be provided effective, efficient and fair law enforcement services. I am convinced that he will do his utmost to insuring that honest and hard-working police officers are not tarnished by the acts of a few miscreants.

Thank you for considering my perspective in considering this important appointment.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM L. MURPHY,
District Attorney, Richmond County, NY

RIORDAN & MCKINZIE,
Los Angeles, CA, September 19, 1997.

Re: Bill Lann Lee

Hon. ORRIN HATCH,
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR HATCH: I am aware of the fact that the Senate Judiciary Committee is considering the nomination of Bill Lann Lee for the post of Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. As the lead attorney representing the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority in the case of *Labor/Community Strategy Center, et al. v. Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority* (the "LACMTA litigation"), I came to know Bill Lann Lee quite well. We clashed on many issues during the course of that litigation. However, I have nothing but the highest regard for Mr. Lann Lee as an attorney and as a gentleman.

Additionally, as a former prosecutor, it is my belief that the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights must be an individual who is pragmatic. During the course of the LACMTA litigation, we were able to work

with Mr. Lee to reach compromises on a number of substantial issues—the most important of which was the Consent Decree that resolved the litigation. Were it not for Mr. Lee's pragmatic approach, the parties would never have been able to resolve their differences.

Notwithstanding the significant disparity between Mr. Lee's political philosophy and my own, I cannot think of a better candidate to fill the position of Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights than Bill Lann Lee.

Sincerely,

KENNETH KLEIN,
of Riordan & McKinzie.●

THE JOURNAL

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate Journal of Proceedings be approved to date.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RICKY RAY HEMOPHILIA RELIEF FUND ACT OF 1998

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of calendar No. 707, H.R. 1023.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1023) to provide for compassionate payments with regard to individuals with blood-clotting disorders, such as hemophilia, who contracted human immunodeficiency virus due to contaminated blood products, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the immediate consideration of the bill?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, H.R. 1023, the Ricky Ray Hemophilia Relief Fund Act, would authorize the establishment of a fund from which compassionate payments would be made to people with hemophilia who contracted HIV/AIDS through tainted blood products during the early 1980s. These people were victimized by the failure of the federal government to safeguard these blood products—failures included inadequate measures to screen out high-risk donors and long-delayed recalls of blood products known to pose an elevated risk of infection. During the time period specified in the legislation, approximately 7,200 victims were infected. Each victim—or the victim's family—would receive a single \$100,000 payment. The total authorization is \$750,000, which would have to be separately appropriated. The relief fund sunsets after 5 years. H.R. 1023 passed the House without objection on the suspension calendar in May. Similar legislation in the Senate (S. 358), which I sponsored, has 62 bipartisan cosponsors.

Mr. JEFFORDS. I rise to make remarks concerning the Ricky Ray Hemophilia Relief Fund Act to provide compassionate payments to hemophiliac victims of the blood supply cri-

sis of the 1980s. The House passed the bill last May; unfortunately the Senate may not be able to pass a bill this year. The tragedy of the blood supply's infection has brought unbearable pain to families all over the country. I have heard from hundreds of these individuals and families over the past months, and I had hoped this bill would bring some closure to the grief of thousands of families who have suffered because of the blood crisis of the 1980s.

I am saddened, however, that the bill that passed the House acknowledged fewer than half the victims of the blood supply crisis. Along with Senators WARNER and FAIRCLOTH, I have fought to include victims of transfusion-associated AIDS in the bill this year. They are victims of the same blood supply crisis and are just as deserving of acknowledgment and compassion from the federal government.

I cannot overstate my disappointment, and I can only imagine their pain. This is a group of people that has suffered a great tragedy. In their minds, in the minds of the hemophiliac community, and in the minds of members who have advocated for the Ricky Ray bill, the federal government played a role in the tragedy. It would be bad enough for the federal government to never step forward and acknowledge the tragedy, but passing a bill without them would have been the worst kind of affront. We would have acknowledged the tragedy, but ignored the distress it has brought to this particular community.

With commitment from a few of my key colleagues that we would pass a bill for transfusion-associated AIDS cases next year, I supported passage of H.R. 1023. I want to take this opportunity to discuss some of the background of the bill and the reasons that I have fought so hard to include the transfusion-associated AIDS community in the Ricky Ray bill this year.

While financial need and simple compassion for the tragedy suffered may be two reasons of many to pass this bill, these reasons alone cannot justify government payments to victims of the blood supply. The bill is heavily rooted in the belief that in the early to mid-1980s the government failed to protect users of the blood supply. The record that has been built in the Senate in floor speeches and in testimony provided at the Labor Committee hearing reflects this reason above all others for passing this bill.

Last October the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources held a hearing on "HIV/AIDS: Recent Developments and Future Opportunities." A good portion of that hearing was devoted to a discussion on the blood crisis of the 1980s, resulting in the HIV infection of thousands of Americans who trusted that the blood or blood products with which they were treated was safe. Witnesses at the hearing included John Williams, the father of a child who contracted HIV from the clotting factor and died at the age of 18, and