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The Center for Victims of Torture Strongly Opposes Bradbury Nomination

ST. PAUL, Minn. and WASHINGTON—In an unprecedented action, the Center for Victims of Torture™ (CVT) is urging U.S. Senators to oppose the nomination of Steven G. Bradbury for general counsel in the Department of Transportation ahead of the vote scheduled for Monday, November 13. In a letter from CVT’s executive director and Washington director, CVT called on Senators to demonstrate that there are consequences for active participation and complicity in carrying out torture by voting against Bradbury’s nomination.

Bradbury was acting head of the Justice Department’s Office of Legal Counsel from 2005 to 2009 and authored several memos providing legal cover to the CIA for the use of torture and cruel treatment. In his memos, Bradbury concluded that the use of many abusive practices such as waterboarding, sleep deprivation and stress positions including shackling, were not contrary to international and United States laws, despite clear evidence to the contrary.

“The nomination of Mr. Bradbury to such a high-level post in the Trump administration demonstrates a complete lack of accountability for individuals who authorized the CIA’s reprehensible program of torturing detainees,” said CVT Executive Director Curt Goering. “It is an affront to our morality and U.S. leadership on human rights. To even consider the placement of an individual who helped establish an official policy of torture into this high-level legal role demonstrates a significant failing of moral leadership.”

“Mr. Bradbury continued to sign off on the CIA’s torture program even after Congress passed the 2005 Detainee Treatment Act, a law that was clearly intended to reaffirm the prohibition on torture and cruel treatment,” Goering added. “He has never expressed any regret for these actions. Confirmation by the Senate would give a stamp of approval to Mr. Bradbury’s egregious role in justifying torture.”

In its more than 30-year history, CVT has never before opposed nor supported nominees for political positions chosen by the President. However, Goering noted, “the CIA torture program was a repugnant and immoral abuse of government authority, and there must be accountability for those who were its champions.”

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The Center for Victims of Torture is a nonprofit organization headquartered in St. Paul, MN, with offices in Atlanta, GA, and Washington, D.C.; and healing initiatives in Africa and the Middle East. Visit www.cvt.org