

ELECTIONS

Sessions claps back at Trump: 'You're damn fortunate' I recused from Russia probe

President Donald Trump tweeted his support for Sessions' opponent, prompting the former attorney general to reply.



From left, President Donald Trump and former Attorney General Jeff Sessions. | Evan Vucci, File/AP Photo

By **EVAN SEMONES**

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Jeff Sessions strongly rebuked President Donald Trump late Friday after the president told Alabama voters to “not trust” the former attorney general over his recusal from the Justice Department’s probe of Russian election meddling.

“Look, I know your anger, but recusal was required by law. I did my duty & you're damn fortunate I did,” Sessions [tweeted](#). “It protected the rule of law & resulted in your exoneration.”

Sessions responded after the president tweeted his support for former Auburn football coach Tommy Tuberville, Sessions' primary opponent as he runs for the Senate seat he once held before being nominated by Trump to serve as the nation’s top law enforcement officer in 2017.

“3 years ago, after Jeff Sessions recused himself, the Fraudulent Mueller Scam began,” Trump [tweeted](#). “He let our Country down. That’s why I endorsed Coach Tommy Tuberville ([@TTuberville](#)), the true supporter of our [#MAGA](#) agenda!”

Sessions followed up on Saturday morning, saying Trump’s thoughts won’t sway Alabama voters’ minds. Sessions also [called](#) Tuberville a “coward who is too afraid” to debate and who is embracing policy positions at odds with Trump’s agenda.

“Mr. President, Alabama can and does trust me, as do conservatives across the country,” Sessions [said](#). “Perhaps you’ve forgotten. They trusted me when I stepped out and put that trust on the line for you.”

The tweet war between the onetime allies continued Saturday evening when Trump suggested Sessions should "drop out of the race" with Tuberville.

"Jeff, you had your chance & you blew it," Trump [wrote](#) of Sessions' time as attorney general. "Recused yourself ON DAY ONE (you never told me of a problem), and ran for the hills. You had no courage, & ruined many lives."

Sessions’ recusal has long angered Trump, who has accused his former attorney general of disloyalty.

The president has repeatedly attacked Sessions on Twitter and during media interviews despite Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Alabama Sen. Richard Shelby urging him not to, according to a [CNN report](#).

The president's ongoing attacks, even after Sessions left the DOJ in 2018, prompted Sessions to release a statement earlier this month explaining his recusal.

"To not recuse myself from that investigation, of which I was a target as a senior campaign official and a witness, would have been breaking the law. I do not and will not break the law," Sessions wrote. "I did the right thing for the country and for President Trump. If I, as a target of the investigation, had broken the law by not recusing myself, it would have been a catastrophe for the rule of law and for the President."

Trump also tweeted support for a slew of Republican congressional candidates, including former White House doctor [Ronny Jackson](#) and former [Rep. Karen Handel](#), who lost her suburban Atlanta seat to current Rep. Lucy McBath in 2018.

Sessions faces Tuberville in a July 14 runoff. A [poll](#) conducted by Cygnal shows Tuberville leading Sessions by more than 20 percentage points.

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