

# President Trump Considers Former New Jersey Governor For Attorney General

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Former Republican Governor Chris Christie of New Jersey, who presided over his state's successful launch of internet gambling in 2013, is reportedly being considered by President Trump to replace fired Attorney General Jeff Sessions.

Christie may be the best choice for the gaming industry which is holding its breath after Sessions' ouster.

A new attorney general could overturn a [2011 opinion](#) by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) which led to the legalization of internet gambling in New Jersey, Delaware, Nevada and Pennsylvania.

Sports-betting operators are depending on the internet to expand their [booming market](#).

James Trusty, who was chief of the DOJ's crime and gangs' section until joining the Ifrah law firm in Washington, D.C. this year, said he would be surprised if the new attorney general cracks down on internet gambling or sports betting.

"Between the PASPA invalidation, the movement in many states towards legalization and regulation, and the growing acceptance that a whole generation of younger people are enjoying e-gaming, fantasy sports, and sports betting without harming the casino margins, it seems unlikely that the OLC opinion will be reversed," Trusty said.

PASPA is the [Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act](#), which included a federal sports-betting ban and was overturned in May in a 6-3 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Even if the 2011 decision is nullified, Trusty said he does not expect gambling prosecutions to become a top priority for the Justice Department.

"Getting rid of the OLC opinion doesn't suddenly unleash a bunch of federal investigators who are working on public corruption, health care fraud and violent gang cases to go chase down sportsbook ventures," Trusty said.

During his [confirmation hearing in January 2017](#), Sessions told the Senate Judiciary Committee he fully intended to review the 2011 opinion.

Sessions said the opinion "shocked" him and he opposed it "when it happened."

But after becoming a subject himself in the probe of Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election, Sessions [abandoned plans to review](#) the controversial 2011 opinion on internet gambling.

Sessions withdrew after hiring attorney Charles "Chuck" Cooper to represent him in the Russian probe.

Cooper had lobbied for [Las Vegas Sands chairman Sheldon Adelson](#) in his never-ending campaign to prohibit internet gambling.

A new attorney general is unlikely to face the conflicts of interest which shackled Sessions.

In addition to Christie, Trump is considering Pam Bondi, the attorney general of Trump's adopted state of Florida, according to CNN.

Meanwhile, Adelson's influence in Congress has diminished significantly in the wake of Democrats winning control of the U.S. House of Representatives in Tuesday's elections.

For example, Republican James Sensenbrenner of Wisconsin will lose his perch as chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security and Investigations.

After being lobbied by Adelson's operatives on Capitol Hill, the 75-year-old Sensenbrenner conducted a [House subcommittee hearing](#) in September on sports betting which proved disastrous for the gaming industry.

Sensenbrenner ignored testimony by Nevada Gaming Control Board chair Becky Harris and Sara Slane, senior vice president of public affairs for the American Gaming Association, who pleaded with the subcommittee to allow states to continue regulating sports betting.

"I think the one thing that all of you agree on is that for Congress to do nothing is the worst possible alternative," Sensenbrenner said in a blatantly false statement to Harris, Slane and other witnesses at the end of the hearing.

Democrats on the House subcommittee are not much friendlier to the gaming industry, but they will not be beholden to Adelson.

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Perhaps the worst nightmare for the gaming industry would be the ascension of Republican Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina to the chairmanship of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Graham, who also [has been mentioned](#) as a potential candidate for attorney general, could succeed Republican Senator Charles Grassley of Iowa, who reportedly wants to become chairman of the Senate Finance Committee.

After Adelson hosted a fundraiser for him in April 2013 in Las Vegas, Graham introduced the [Restoration of America's Wire Act](#) (RAWA) in 2014 and again in 2015.

The Senate never scheduled a hearing on either RAWA bill, which would have abolished internet gambling, but Graham could re-introduce the measure and schedule hearings on it if he is chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

"I don't think enacting legislation is realistic — I don't think the House would go along with it," said a Washington, D.C. gambling lobbyist who requested anonymity.

"But [Graham] could certainly pressure DOJ to reverse the 2011 OLC memo or to issue guidance that bets placed of the internet — even on an intrastate basis — are subject to the Wire Act."

The [1961 Wire Act](#) prohibits the transmission of sports-betting transactions across state lines.

Trusty, the former DOJ chief of organized crime and gangs' section, said the 2011 OLC opinion was "spot on in terms of analyzing the Wire Act and limiting its applicability to sports betting."

"With PASPA now in the grave, focusing on the non-binding Wire Act interpretation seems an even more remote possibility than in recent years," Trusty said.

On Election Night, Adelson and his wife, Miriam, reportedly viewed the results with Trump at a watch party.

The Adelsons pumped a total of \$113m into the mid-term elections to maintain Republican control of the House and Senate, according to the Guardian.

Six months ago, Adelson already had spent \$30,000 on the Nevada governor's race to support Republican candidate [Adam Laxalt](#).

Laxalt lost to Steve Sisolak, who becomes the first Democratic governor of Nevada in 20 years.

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