

National Bar Association Denounces White House Policy Targeting Legal Professionals

Organization Raises Concern over Administration's Abuse of Executive Power

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Washington, D.C. — The National Bar Association (NBA) firmly opposes and condemns the recent memorandum issued by the White House to U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi and Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem. The directive calls on the Department of Justice to impose sanctions on attorneys and law firms representing clients in litigation against the federal government that the Trump administration considers “unreasonable” or “frivolous.” This action poses a serious threat to the independence of the legal profession and directly challenges the constitutional right to legal representation. It undermines the foundation of the American legal system and endangers the rule of law.

NBA President Wiley S. Adams issued the following statement:

“This unprecedented attempt to intimidate and penalize attorneys for advocating on behalf of their clients is beyond disturbing. It undermines the very foundation of our democracy—the rule of law—and sends a chilling message to those who dare to challenge government overreach. Lawyers are duty-bound to provide zealous representation, and this directive is a blatant attempt to silence them through fear and retaliation.”

The NBA stands in full solidarity with the many civil rights and legal advocacy organizations condemning the administration's action. This directive risks deterring legitimate legal challenges, infringing on access to justice, and eroding public trust in the impartiality of the legal system.

This latest move follows a troubling pattern of efforts by the administration to curtail the independence and integrity of the legal profession. Targeting law firms for their involvement in litigation against government policies raises profound concerns about retaliatory abuse of executive power.

President Adams added:

“In any democratic society, the courtroom must remain a place where government actions can be challenged without fear of reprisal. The legal profession is not an enemy of the state, it is a safeguard for the people and our system of democracy.

Attempts to punish attorneys for fulfilling their ethical obligations threaten the rights of all Americans.”

The NBA calls on the administration to immediately rescind this dangerous directive and reaffirm its obligation to uphold the Constitution and the principles of justice. The NBA also urges members of the legal community to remain vigilant and unwavering in defending the rule of law, the right to counsel and the freedom to seek redress through the courts.

About the National Bar Association (NBA):

Founded in 1925, the National Bar Association is the nation’s oldest and largest network of predominantly Black attorneys and judges. Representing over 67,000 lawyers, judges, law professors, and law students, the NBA is committed to advancing the science of jurisprudence, improving the administration of justice, protecting judicial independence, and safeguarding the civil and political rights of all citizens.