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OPEN LETTER

To: William R. Bay, President, American Bar Association
From: Wiley S. Adams, President, National Bar Association
Date: March 31, 2025

Dear President Bay:

On behalf of the **National Bar Association (NBA)**, I extend our deepest appreciation for your presence at the **NBA’s 45th Annual MidYear Conference in Des Moines, Iowa**. Your participation in this important gathering was an important and meaningful gesture that underscored the continued and growing unity between our associations and the shared **commitment we hold to the legal profession’s highest ideals**.


We greatly appreciate the **resolution** presented by the **American Bar Association (ABA)** during our recent MidYear Conference, formally **expressing regret** for the ABA’s historical exclusion of Black lawyers from ABA membership. That acknowledgment is a vital act of truth-telling and reconciliation. We recognize and appreciate this **historic step** toward building an inclusive legal community rooted in justice, equity, and mutual respect.

As we reflect on the arc of our shared history, it is both inspiring and instructive to note that three of the NBA’s distinguished past presidents—**The Honorable Dennis Archer, Paulette Brown and Reginald Turner**—have gone on to lead the ABA. Their leadership stands as a testament to the talent, resolve, and impact of our members, and to the bridges that continue to be built between our organizations.

The **unity of the legal profession** has never been more essential than at this pivotal moment in our nation’s history. The rule of law is under siege. Democratic norms and institutions, including cabinet level departments, are being undermined by a wave of unlawful Executive Orders. The administration, in search of revenge, is leveraging the vast power and resources of the government to suppress protected speech and freedom of association in its escalating attacks against the media, judges, prosecutors, law firms, and lawyers. **The National Bar Association stands resolute with the ABA** and our colleagues across the bar in defending the **rule of law**, the integrity and independence of the **judiciary**, the freedom of the **press**, and the **sacred right to legal representation** without intimidation or fear of reprisal from the government.

Together, we must safeguard legal institutions that **uphold democracy, support civil rights** and protect the vulnerable. **We welcome continued collaboration and solidarity with the ABA** as we navigate these challenges and work toward a more just and democratic society. We look forward to seeing you at our Centennial Convention in Chicago from July 26th to August 1, 2025.

With deep respect and in common purpose,


Wiley S. Adams
Centennial President
National Bar Association