



Statement from National Bar Association President Wiley S. Adams

A President Unhinged and Relentlessly Bent on Revenge

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The National Bar Association (“NBA”) unequivocally condemns the Trump administration’s continued attacks on the press and judiciary and its recent actions weaponizing the government to attack the President’s “enemies” list. The President’s administration is now targeting Covington & Burling, LLP, the law firm that represented former Special Counsel Jack Smith, by rescinding contracts with the firm and revoking security clearances for attorneys who assisted Jack Smith. Jack Smith led the prosecution of the President for alleged mishandling of classified documents. The administration’s actions represent a continuing dangerous assault on the fundamental principles that uphold our democracy and the rule of law and constitute a clear attempt to silence those who would hold power accountable. Our new President appears to be unhinged and relentlessly bent on revenge.

Our democracy was not built on the whims of autocrats and tyrants. It was built on the enduring principles of justice, equality, and constitutional governance. These recent efforts to intimidate legal professionals, dismantle the credibility of the press, and erode judicial independence represent an existential threat to the pillars upon which our nation stands.

Our nation’s democracy rests on four critical pillars that must be fiercely defended:

1. **Adherence to and respect for the Rule of Law and the U.S. Constitution** – The foundation of our democracy is the recognition of the roles and powers of the three co-equal branches of government. Any effort to undermine this structure threatens the integrity of our legal and political system and invites authoritarianism.
2. **An unbiased and independent judiciary** – The judiciary must remain free from political interference and intimidation. It serves as a vital check on governmental overreach. Judges and legal professionals must be able to perform their duties without fear of retribution or coercion. Attempts to discredit or retaliate against law firms and attorneys for fulfilling their professional obligations is an affront to the very notion of justice.
3. **A free and independent press** – A press that operates without censorship or government retaliation is essential to holding power accountable. The Trump administration’s repeated attacks on journalists and media institutions pose a grave threat to the transparency and accountability that our democracy demands. The continued demonization of journalists and media institutions is an effort to suppress truth, mislead and misinform the public and erode transparency in governance. Partisan control over media outlets also greatly jeopardizes the ability to keep citizens fully informed.
4. **An informed and engaged citizenry** – Our democracy thrives when the public has access to unbiased information and actively participates in civic life. Efforts to manipulate,



misinform, or suppress critical discourse corrode the public's trust in democratic institutions.

The NBA is nonpartisan but will not remain silent in the face of these dangerous attacks on the rule of law and the pillars of our democracy and democratic institutions. We urge all leaders—regardless of political affiliation—to stand firmly against these efforts to weaponize the legal system, threaten judicial independence, and undermine constitutional governance. This moment requires moral courage, unwavering commitment to justice, and an unrelenting defense of our core democratic values. It requires that we activate ourselves and provide the necessary leadership and guidance to restore compliance with both the rule of law and the foundational principles of this nation.

The NBA has always stood on the front lines in the fight for justice, and we will continue to use our voice, our legal expertise, and our collective power to resist any attempts to erode the pillars of democracy. The strength of our nation, and its future, depend on our ability to uphold these principles with steadfast and unyielding resolve. As an organization dedicated to justice, equality, and the integrity of the legal profession, we will continue to speak out against any efforts to undermine democratic values. Our nation depends on it.

The ultimate weapon against lawlessness is the American people. Make your voices heard by contacting your elected officials and engaging in “good trouble” through peaceful protest.

I will be in Selma, Alabama this weekend to honor those heroes upon whose shoulders we stand, and to join with leaders of like-minded organizations to chart a new course through these increasingly troubled waters. Please join me there if you can.

In Your Service,

Wiley S. Adams

President

National Bar Association