

LAWYERS DEFENDING AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

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Prominent Lawyers Call for a Stop to Presidential Attacks on Democracy

BOSTON – A non-partisan group of prominent lawyers has released a Statement decrying what it sees as President Trump’s most serious violations of the basic values of truth, law and civility which lawyers must defend. The group is again calling on lawyers to protect the rule of law and the Constitution from what it sees as relentless attacks by President Trump and his Administration.

In the Statement, the group, Lawyers Defending American Democracy (LDAD), details what it says are the President’s violation of the democratic principles which embody those values, including attacks on the media, repeatedly issuing false statements to the public, failing to respect the separation of powers by refusing to obey congressional oversight requests, and disrespecting the rights and dignity of those he perceives as political opponents.

LDAD is led by former Massachusetts Attorney General **Scott Harshbarger**. “If we are to fulfill our obligations as members of a profession charged with protecting and defending our Constitution, we must speak out when we see democracy and the rule of law being undermined at the highest levels of our government,” said Harshbarger. “It is time for lawyers — as a profession — to defend the checks and balances and demand accountability from lawmakers,” he added. “The time for playing politics is over. If lawyers do not lead, we risk losing our democracy.”

Endorsing the Statement, **Professor Laurence H. Tribe** observes that: “America has always had its flaws and original sins, but the better angels of our nature have never in our lifetimes been as threatened with extinction as they are today. The very foundations of constitutional democracy under law – and the aspirations to inclusion and decency that we have built on despite repeated setbacks – are now in genuine peril. As lawyers and as citizens, we have an obligation to come to America’s rescue. That is why I am so proud to endorse this Statement.”

Another prominent endorser of today's statement is **Charles Fried, former United States Solicitor General in the Reagan Administration, 1985-89.**

The Statement appears over the signatures of the LDAD Steering Committee, comprised of former or current judges, law professors, government officials, heads of and partners and associates at major law firms, corporate general counsels and public interest lawyers.

In February 2019, LDAD issued an Open Letter to the President and to Congress setting forth core democratic principles which it believes the President has repeatedly flouted. The Letter has been co-signed by 550 members of the bar nationally.

Prominent signers of the Open Letter include **former United States Senator Adlai Stevenson III**, **Professor Tribe**, Carl M. Loeb University Professor and Professor of Constitutional Law, Harvard Law School, and **Charles Fried**, Beneficial Professor of Law, Harvard Law School (University affiliation noted for identification purposes only).

Among the 550 signers of the February 2019 Open Letter were 30 acting and retired judges, 70 former or present law professors, (including 7 present or former law school deans), 85 present or former senior government executives (including federal and state elected legislative officials, and 17 former State Attorneys General or Assistant Attorneys General), 90 law firm partners, including 15 heads of law firms, and 10 Bar Association officers.

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