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States United and Lawyers Defending American Democracy Call on D.C.'s Office of Disciplinary Counsel to Investigate Attorney John Eastman for Assisting in Trump's Attempts to Overturn 2020 Election

[Bar Complaint](#) Garners Support from 50 Bipartisan Former Officials and Legal Experts; Points to ODC's Charges Against Rudy Giuliani and Jeffrey Clark as Examples of Holding Democracy Violators Accountable

Washington, D.C. — The [States United Democracy Center](#) and [Lawyers Defending American Democracy](#) (LDAD) today submitted a [bar complaint](#) to the District of Columbia's Office of Disciplinary Counsel (ODC) requesting that the ODC open an investigation into John Eastman's assistance in former President Trump's attempts to discredit and overturn the 2020 election results. The complaint was signed by 50 prominent attorneys and former officials from both sides of the aisle. Signatories include former presidents of the D.C. Bar, former federal judges and Justice Department officials, and White House ethics advisors from both the Bush and Obama administrations.

In the complaint, the groups urge the ODC to take disciplinary action against Eastman—who is licensed to practice law in both D.C. and California—similar to the formal charges it has filed against Trump campaign attorney Rudy Giuliani and former U.S. Assistant Attorney General Jeffrey Clark. In addition to compiling evidence from previous bar complaints filed against Eastman by [States United](#) and [LDAD](#), the groups outline additional information that has recently emerged regarding Eastman's conduct. This includes Eastman's admission that fake electors for Trump would be “dead on arrival in Congress” and his request to Giuliani a few days after the January 6, 2021, insurrection to “be on the pardon list.”

“John Eastman used his law licenses, from both D.C. and California, as part of a multi-pronged effort to undermine the will of the American voters, threaten our democracy, and obstruct the peaceful transfer of power,” said **Aaron Scherzer, Senior Counsel at the States United Democracy Center**. “The State Bar of California has already announced an investigation into Eastman, and the D.C. Office of Disciplinary Counsel should follow suit to protect the public and hold Eastman accountable for violating his ethical responsibilities.”

“As an attorney, John Eastman has ethical obligations—he swore an oath to uphold the rule of law and the Constitution when he was admitted to the Bar,” said **Scott Harshbarger, Chair and Co-founder of LDAD and former two-term Attorney General of Massachusetts**. “The D.C. Office of Disciplinary Counsel has already filed charges against other attorneys whose ethical breaches undermined our democracy—Rudy Giuliani and Jeffrey Clark—for their actions related to the 2020 election. It’s time that the ODC investigate the role Eastman played and take action accordingly.”

“If we want to preserve and defend our democracy, we must hold people accountable when they work to undermine it. Asking the D.C. Office of Disciplinary Counsel to investigate John Eastman is a crucial step toward accountability in this instance,” said **Norm Eisen, Co-Chair of the States United Democracy Center and former White House Ethics Czar**. “The case for an investigation into Eastman only continues to grow stronger as we learn new information about his conduct.”

Key excerpts from the [complaint](#) include:

“Since then, even more information concerning Mr. Eastman’s conduct has come to light. For instance, in the previously referenced federal litigation, the court analyzed additional emails from Mr. Eastman, including ones in which ‘Dr. Eastman explained that the worst case for the plan was receiving a court decision that constrained Vice President Pence’s authority to reject electors.’ Accordingly, Mr. Trump’s legal team decided to ‘avoid the courts’ and instead ‘forged ahead with a political campaign to disrupt the electoral count.’ In addition, the U.S. Department of Justice recently revealed that it has obtained two federal search warrants to seize and search Mr. Eastman’s cell phone.

“Moreover, the House Select Committee also revealed more information bearing on Eastman’s conduct through its recent series of public hearings. For example, it was revealed that, although Mr. Eastman would later go on to urge Mr. Pence to disregard Biden electors in favor of purported alternate electors for Trump, Mr.

Eastman had previously admitted that the false Trump electors had no legal weight and would be '[d]ead on arrival in Congress.' As another notable example, a few days after the January 6 attack, Mr. Eastman emailed Rudy Giuliani with the request: 'I've decided that I should be on the pardon list, if that is still in the works.' And we learned that Mr. Eastman pressured the speaker of the Arizona House to decertify that state's 2020 electoral votes, even though there was no evidence of widespread or outcome-determinative fraud. Furthermore, we learned of evidence that Mr. Eastman worked directly with Mr. Trump to implement the false-electors scheme."

This bar complaint is the latest action taken by [States United](#) and [LDAD](#) to hold democracy violators accountable.

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About the States United Democracy Center

The [States United Democracy Center](#) is a nonpartisan organization advancing free, fair, and secure elections. We connect state officials, law enforcement leaders, and pro-democracy partners across America with the tools and expertise they need to safeguard our democracy. For more information, visit <https://statesuniteddemocracy.org/>.

About Lawyers Defending American Democracy

Founded in 2019, Lawyers Defending American Democracy (LDAD) is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to fostering adherence to the protection of the Constitution and the rule of law. LDAD has issued a variety of Open Letters and Statements calling for adherence by public officials to the rule of law and encouraging fellow lawyers, leaders of bar associations, and the legal academy to join in speaking out against threats to democracy. LDAD has also filed disciplinary complaints against lawyers who have violated their oath to protect the Constitution, for example, Rudolph Giuliani, Jeffrey Clark, Kenneth Paxton, and John Eastman. All letters, statements and briefs are available at <https://ldad.org/>.

