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Letter from the Deans of American Law Schools

Lawyers play a critical role in sustaining our constitutional democracy. President John F. Kennedy remarked on the enduring commitment needed to maintain such a system of government: “Democracy is never a final achievement. It is a call to untiring effort” We are thus grateful to the American Bar Association Task Force for American Democracy for its efforts to protect and preserve the rule of law and the ideals of our profession. As law deans, we affirm that training for the next generation of lawyers should include these important elements:

Teaching our students to uphold the highest standards of professionalism, which includes a duty to support our constitutional democracy and, per the Model Rules of Professional Conduct, to “further the public’s understanding of and confidence in the rule of law and the justice system.”

Offering courses, workshops, and events that engage with the rule of law and democracy and sharing teaching resources through a new clearinghouse that the American Bar Association is creating.

Teaching our students to disagree respectfully and to engage across partisan and ideological divides.

Encouraging our students to support and defend the Constitution and the rule of law through clinical work, public education, and advocacy.

Supporting public education and events focused on the rule of law and the values of our constitutional democracy.

We call upon all members of the legal profession to join us in the vital work ahead.

Signed,

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