



American College of Trial Lawyers

MARYLAND STATE COMMITTEE ISSUES STATEMENT CONDEMNING ATTACKS ON JUDGES

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND (October 20, 2023):

The Maryland State Committee of the American College of Trial Lawyers (ACTL) grieves the assassination of Washington County Circuit Court Judge Andrew ("Drew") Wilkinson and calls for government action to protect the safety, security, and independence of all state and federal judges throughout the United States. As Attorney General Merrick Garland has stated: "The rise of violence and unlawful threats of violence directed at those who serve the public is unacceptable and dangerous to our democracy." We cannot tolerate violence or threats of violence against judges or any other public servants at work, home, or any other location.

Judges must be free to fulfill their judicial duties fearlessly, deciding cases solely on the basis of the facts and the law, without being concerned that an aggrieved party will exact retribution. Retaliation against a judge – violently or otherwise – inherently chills the ability of judges to decide cases without fear or favor. The rule of law will not long endure if it is open season on the nation's judges. The Maryland State Committee of the American College of Trial Lawyers urges all branches of our federal and state governments to take all measures necessary to ensure the safety, security, and independence of the judiciary, one of the foundational pillars of our democracy.

Judge Wilkinson served our citizens with distinction. We mourn with his family, friends, colleagues, and fellow Marylanders.

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About the American College of Trial Lawyers

The American College of Trial Lawyers is composed of preeminent members of the trial bar from the United States and Canada and is recognized as the leading trial lawyers organization in both countries. Founded in 1950, the College is an invitation only fellowship. The College thoroughly investigates each nominee for admission and selects only those who have demonstrated the very highest standards of trial advocacy, ethical conduct, integrity, professionalism, and collegiality. The College is dedicated to maintaining and seeking to improve the standards of trial practice, professionalism, ethics, and the administration of justice through education and public statements on important legal issues relating to its mission. The College strongly supports the independence of the

judiciary, trial by jury, respect for the rule of law, access to justice, and fair and just representation of all parties to legal proceedings. For more information about the College, visit its website at www.actl.com.

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