



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF TRIAL LAWYERS ISSUES STATEMENT OPPOSING THE RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY PRESIDENT TRUMP REGARDING FEDERAL JUDGE JAMES L. ROBERT

#### **Political Attack on Judges Poses a Direct Threat to Judicial Independence**

**IRVINE, CALIFORNIA – FEBRUARY 5, 2017** – The American College of Trial Lawyers, a non-political organization composed of the leading trial lawyers in the United States—Republicans and Democrats, plaintiffs’ lawyers and defense lawyers, all selected without regard to political views—today issues a statement condemning the recent public statements by President Trump regarding Federal Judge James L. Robert. The College considers such attacks as a direct assault on judicial independence, the backbone of our constitutional democracy.

The statement was made by Bartholomew J. Dalton, President of The American College of Trial Lawyers, on behalf of the College and its 5,900 Fellows.

Dalton said, “The President used inappropriate and insulting language because he did not agree with Judge Robert’s ruling. The President stated, ‘The opinion of this so-called judge, which essentially takes law enforcement away from our country, is ridiculous and will be overturned.’ Judge Robert is not a ‘so-called judge’ but a federal judge who was appointed by President George W. Bush and confirmed by the Senate. It is wrong for the Chief Executive of the Executive Branch to demean a member of the judiciary with such language. This undermines judicial independence which is the backbone to our constitutional democracy.” The President has the right to disagree with a judicial opinion and to seek legal means to overturn it on appeal; but ad hominem and disparaging personal attacks on an individual judge are an affront to the fundamental principle of judicial independence that cannot be ignored.

The position of the American College of Trial Lawyers is documented in a white paper on [\*Judicial Independence: A Cornerstone of Democracy which must be Defended\*](#), which is available on the College website.

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. The College is dedicated to maintaining and improving the standards of trial practice, the administration of justice and the ethics of the profession. The College has long supported the independence of the Judiciary and respect for the courts in the United States and Canada; that independence is fundamental to our democratic societies.

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