



# American College of Trial Lawyers

## **Ohio State Committee of the American College of Trial Lawyers Applauds Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor's Statement in Response to the Ohio Republican Party's Attack on Judge Richard A. Frye**

DAYTON, OHIO (September 18, 2020) - An independent judiciary is crucial to protecting the rights embedded in the United States Constitution and in the constitutions of the 50 states. Although the principle of an independent judiciary emerged from the Founders' earliest writings, it may be the most underappreciated and least understood of our basic Constitutional rights. Under our system of government, state and federal judges are empowered to provide the final word on the validity and enforceability (constitutionality) of legislation and of actions by the executive branch of government, which is known as the principle of judicial review.

The Ohio State Committee of the American College of Trial Lawyers (ACTL) – which is composed of preeminent members of the professionally and politically diverse Ohio trial bar – strongly supports the independence of the judiciary, respect for the rule of law, and the fair and just representation of all parties to legal proceedings. In keeping with this mission, we write to condemn the Ohio Republican Party's (ORP) statement, which it tweeted on September 16, 2020, regarding Judge Richard A. Frye's decision in *Ohio Democratic Party v. Frank LaRose*, Franklin C.P. No. 20 CV-5634. Equally important, we applaud Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor for her swift and thoughtful rebuke of the ORP's "disgraceful, deceitful piece," in which the ORP "accuses Judge Frye of colluding with the Ohio Democratic Party and labels him a 'partisan judge.'" [See Statement by Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor of the Supreme Court of Ohio](#) (September 16, 2020).

While the ORP has every right to disagree with the decision and to seek review on appeal, it demeans the judiciary and the rule of law by making a baseless character attack on a judge. As noted by ACTL President Douglas R. Young: "Such attacks undermine the public's confidence in the judiciary and have no place in political discourse".

We are proud of Chief Justice O'Connor for her courage and leadership in condemning the ORP's statement and safeguarding public confidence in fair and impartial courts.

### **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 lawyer's 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](http://www.actl.com).

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