



AMERICAN COLLEGE OF TRIAL LAWYERS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ACTL CONDEMNS ELON MUSK'S CALL FOR AN IMMEDIATE WAVE OF JUDICIAL IMPEACHMENTS

NEWPORT BEACH, CALIFORNIA (February 25, 2025) – The American College of Trial Lawyers (ACTL), acting through its Executive Committee, condemns the statement by Presidential Advisor Elon Musk, calling for [“an immediate wave of judicial impeachments, not just one”](#) against all judges, who issue orders blocking, even temporarily, the power of the Executive Branch to unilaterally overhaul the government. Earlier, he called for the impeachment of United States District Court Judge Paul A. Engelmayer in reaction to the Judge’s order temporarily restraining the Treasury Department from providing access to its payment system to anyone other than civil servants with a need for access to perform their duties. The College previously issued a [statement denouncing that attack on Judge Engelmayer](#). In expanding his baseless attacks on the federal judiciary, Mr. Musk calls for the impeachment of United States District Court Judge John Bates, who issued a temporary restraining order requiring federal health agencies to restore online datasets the administration ordered to be taken down. He also seeks the impeachment of United States District Court Judge John J. McConnell, Jr., who ordered the administration to temporarily lift its federal spending freeze. Mr. Musk’s impeachment calls have not gone unnoticed as at least three members of the House of Representatives have announced their support for impeachment of the Judges targeted by Mr. Musk. Representative Derrick Van Orden was the first to follow through by filing articles of impeachment against Judge Engelmayer. Representative Andy Ogles has filed articles of impeachment against Judge Bates.

Without question, every citizen has the right to openly disagree with a decision and to challenge it for its conclusions, soundness or potential consequences. There are proper ways to challenge contested judicial orders, primarily through appeals. But for more than two centuries, judges have been vested with the clear right and duty to interpret the Constitution and statutory law and, when necessary, declare legislative and executive acts invalid or unconstitutional. Threats of impeachment for such judicial acts have no constitutional grounding and are patently inconsistent with the rule of law upon which our Nation was founded. Moreover, such threats are dangerous because they undermine the public’s trust in the rule of law and may provoke violence against judges. Mr. Musk’s comments surely contribute to a trend of increasing peril for judges as his followers flood social media with incendiary claims about the judges’ conduct or motives. Courts need to be free from outside



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influence and political intimidation, so judges can fairly and impartially decide cases, without fear or favor, faithful to the law and the facts presented.

The Mission Statement of the College underscores the critical importance to our democracy of an independent judiciary and respect for the rule of law. We write today to emphasize those principles. We call upon our Fellows and all lawyers, judges, legislators, executive officials, historians, political scientists, and citizens who value our democracy to speak out and condemn threats to impeach judges because of disagreement with the judge's lawful orders.

About The American College of Trial Lawyers

The American College of Trial Lawyers comprises the best of the trial bar from the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico and is widely considered to be the premier professional trial organization in North America. 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 maintains and seeks 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 has no ties to any political party or any partisan endeavors. 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.

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