



AMERICAN COLLEGE OF TRIAL LAWYERS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ACTL CONDEMNS ELON MUSK'S ATTACK ON A FEDERAL JUDGE AND HIS CALL FOR THE JUDGE'S IMPEACHMENT

NEWPORT BEACH, CALIFORNIA (February 10, 2025) – The American College of Trial Lawyers (ACTL), acting through its Executive Committee, condemns the recent statement by Elon Musk, calling for the impeachment of United States District Judge Paul A. Engelmayer of the Southern District of New York, and referring to the Judge as “corrupt.” Mr. Musk’s statement was in reaction to Judge Engelmayer’s Order on February 8, 2025 temporarily restraining (for five days pending further hearing) the Treasury Department from providing access to its payment systems to anyone “other than civil servants with a need for access to perform their job duties.” Mr. Musk posted on social media: “A corrupt judge protecting corruption. . . He needs to be impeached NOW.”

Attacks like these, which make groundless accusations of “corruption,” and call for impeachment without any allegation of an impeachable offense, are dangerous because they undermine the public’s trust in the rule of law and risk provoking violence against judges. They also threaten the independence of the judiciary because they are baseless and intimidating.

We, of course, recognize Mr. Musk’s right to disagree with the judge’s decision, and to engage in political speech. We also recognize that decisions from our courts may incite strong reactions and criticisms. Every citizen has a right to disagree with a decision and challenge it for its conclusions, soundness and potential consequences.

But for a public figure such as Mr. Musk to protest a decision by accusing the judge of “corruption” and calling for his impeachment, without any basis, demeans our system of justice and puts the rule of law at risk. Such groundless and reckless accusations should be universally condemned.

Founded in 1950, the American College is dedicated to maintaining and improving the standards of trial practice, professional ethics, and the administration of justice. The College is an invitation-only fellowship of lawyers in the United States and Canada who have achieved acknowledged distinction in trial practice. The College has no ties to any political party or any partisan endeavors. The Mission Statement of the College underscores the critical importance to our democracy of an independent judiciary and respect for the rule of law.



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We write today to emphasize those principles. Judges must decide cases with faithfulness to the law, without fear or favor, and free from the influence of partisan politics or other external pressure.

We call upon all lawyers and their professional organizations to rededicate themselves to preserving a fair and impartial court system. Our obligations as lawyers to our system of justice and to those who serve on the bench demand no less of us.

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 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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