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Former Deputy Solicitor General of the United States and former Counsel to the Special Prosecutor, Watergate Special Prosecution Force; who argued 17 U.S. Supreme Court cases, including *United States. v. Nixon*

**BREAKING: DC LEGAL LEADERS FILE AMICUS IN
PERKINS COIE V. U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

Former Presidents of the D.C. Bar File Amicus Brief in Support of the Rule of Law, Challenging Administration's Executive Order Targeting Perkins Coie Law Firm

WASHINGTON, D.C.- On Wednesday night, 17 former presidents of the District of Columbia Bar filed an [amicus brief](#) with the United States District Court for the District of Columbia in *Perkins Coie LLP v. U.S. Department of Justice* and in support of the Rule of Law.

Washington, D.C. law firm Perkins Coie LLP is challenging the March 6, [Executive Order](#) issued by President Trump that strips the firm of security clearances and blocks its attorneys from access to federal buildings in retaliation for the firm's association with and representation of clients the president perceives as political opponents. The brief asserts that the actions President Trump has directed against Perkins Coie and other lawyers and law firms pose a grave threat to the Rule of Law and the legal system.

"Other law firms that the President dislikes are being forced to negotiate for "protection" from his threatened retaliation ... some already have succumbed to the threats," the [amicus brief](#) states. "The adversary system is a basic element of the Rule of Law on which our constitutional structure rests. Any constraints on that system, therefore, could only be justified by the clearest constitutional authorization and only in the most extreme factual context. Neither requirement is satisfied in the current setting."

The President's actions challenged in the lawsuit are not merely an attack on a single law firm, but an assault on the integrity and vital underpinnings of the American legal process itself. These District of Columbia legal leaders join the American Bar Association and dozens of state

and local bar associations in condemning these attacks on the Rule of Law and urge the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia to grant Perkins Coie's motion for summary judgment.

"This conduct is patently unlawful," said Philip Allen Lacovara, former deputy solicitor general of the United States and counsel to the special prosecutor, Watergate Special Prosecution Force, and former D.C. Bar President. "Any intervention by a President that demonstrably obstructs the functioning of the legal process is nothing short of a betrayal of this solemn constitutional duty."

The amicus brief affirms:

- The adversary system is an essential element of the Rule of Law in the American Constitutional structure and the government may not put its "official thumb on the scales of justice" by dictating whether and how a lawyer can represent a client or cause.
- The right to representation includes the right to select one's own counsel for fair and reliable functioning of the judicial system without being penalized for retaining a lawyer's or law firm's services.
- A government official may not punish lawyers or law firms for vigorous representation of clients or causes about which the official disagrees or has a personal grudge.
- The President's sanctioning of lawyers and law firms substantially undermines their ability to undertake essential pro bono services.

A copy of the amicus brief can be found here: [Read the Amicus – DC Leaders for Rule of Law.](#)

Philip Allen Lacovara is available for comment.