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Contact: Toni Valenti
tvalenti@nycla.org

**New York County Lawyers Association Issues Statement on
Judicial Independence and Freedom of Speech**

The Officers of the New York County Lawyers Association (NYCLA) issued the following statement regarding their concern for recent threats against the judiciary.

Threats of violence against judges and other public servants, as well as publication of their home addresses as a tool of intimidation, have unfortunately become part of today's political landscape. Last year, NYCLA condemned the doxing of New York's Chief Judge. We also supported the Daniel Aderl Judicial Security and Privacy Act of 2021, introduced after the murder of a federal judge's son by an angry litigant, as well as proposed state legislation that would have made it illegal to publish the personal information of judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and court personnel. Judges cannot do their jobs, which include making difficult decisions in politically charged cases, in an atmosphere of fear and intimidation. Likewise, public servants should not live in fear that they will be targeted for performing their official duties.

The continuing polarization of our politics makes the need for action more urgent. The federal magistrate judge who recently authorized a search of Mar-a-Lago has been threatened with violence; he has been the target anti-Semitic slurs; and his home address has been posted online. The names of two FBI agents who were involved in the search have been published. An armed man who was angry about the search – and who had posted violent rhetoric online – attacked an FBI office in Cincinnati. And, of course, the Capitol was attacked on January 6, 2021.

We would be remiss if we did not also mention Friday's attack against author Salman Rushdie, who has lived under a threat of death since his publication of *The Satanic Verses*. It is imperative

to the functioning of our democracy, and to the preservation of the rule of law, that political discourse is not coupled with threats, intimidation, or violence.

About the New York County Lawyers Association

The New York County Lawyers Association (www.nycla.org) was founded in 1908 as one of the first major bar associations in the country that admitted members without regard to race, ethnicity, religion, or gender. Since its inception, it has pioneered some of the most far-reaching and tangible reforms in American jurisprudence and has continuously played an active role in legal developments and public policy.

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