



For Immediate Release

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LDF Condemns President Trump’s Dangerous and Overtly Political Speech at Department of Justice and Ongoing Attack on the Legal Profession

The Legal Defense Fund (LDF) today denounced President Trump’s unprecedented and dangerous speech at the Department of Justice on Friday. LDF President and Director-Counsel Janai Nelson issued the following statement.

“The Justice Department headquarters stands as a pillar of our democracy – a beacon of impartiality, where the law must be applied fairly and without political favor. By using that sacred space to launch a personal, partisan, vengeful, and highly irresponsible attack on civil rights and social justice lawyers, President Trump has undermined the very foundation of justice in this country.

“Civil rights lawyers play a critical role in holding those in power accountable and ensuring equal justice under the law. Yet on Friday, President Trump targeted them with inflammatory rhetoric, casting them as political enemies rather than advocates for justice. His remarks weren’t just reckless – they were dangerous. Personal attacks on social justice lawyers set an alarming precedent, creating a chilling effect designed to stifle opposition and silence those who challenge abuses of power.

“President Trump’s words were not those of a leader who respects the rule of law – they were those of a man seeking to bend it to his personal and political will.

“These latest comments follow on the heels of politically motivated and retributive executive orders that target law firms that Mr. Trump does not like. His administration has also sought to harass law firms with baseless accusations because of their embrace of popular principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. The totality of these actions is a condemnable attack on our legal system, including fundamental First Amendment freedoms and the Sixth Amendment right to counsel, among other constitutional values.

“At the Legal Defense Fund, we will not stand idly by while the President undermines our legal system and attacks civil rights lawyers working in the public interest for doing their jobs. We stand in solidarity with our legal colleagues and civil rights lawyers who

have come under fire, and we will continue to act – through legal pathways, advocacy, and organizing – to defend the rule of law.”

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