



The Association of the Bar of the City of New York

Office of the President

STATEMENT ON THREATS TO JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE

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The Association of the Bar of the City of New York expresses its strong opposition to criticism of members of the judiciary, and threats of retaliation, made recently by members of Congress and others with regard to the state and federal judges who heard proceedings in the Schiavo family litigation.

The Association also expresses its strong support for the dedicated members of the state and federal judiciary who agree upon taking office to administer justice fairly in the cases brought before them. The harsh criticisms by members of Congress profoundly threaten the independence of the judiciary and the rule of law that is essential to a free and democratic society. Such criticisms and threats from Congress also threaten to jeopardize the delicate balance of power among the branches of government that was established in our Constitution.

Whatever one's views on the underlying social issues, there can be no doubt that it is the duty of judges to apply the applicable law to the facts in the particular cases before them. As members of the legal profession it is important, especially at this time, that we express our support for the judiciary and their proper discharge of their duties, and to encourage other members of the public to do the same, and that we speak out against the unfounded attacks on judicial independence.