

Resolution Regarding Rule of Law and Peaceful Transition of Power

WHEREAS, the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) strives to promote the independence of the judiciary and the legal profession, and promote an effective legal system, accessible to all; and

WHEREAS, the WSBA comprises 40,000 members with a wide variety of political beliefs, backgrounds, and viewpoints; and

WHEREAS, the WSBA members, in conjunction with members of the bench and law enforcement, stand at the forefront of ensuring an effective legal system in Washington; and

WHEREAS, the WSBA members, as licensed legal professionals, have special responsibilities to uphold the rule of law and the peaceful transfer of power; and

WHEREAS, the WSBA is prohibited from taking positions on political or social issues that do not relate to or affect the practice of law or the administration of justice; and

WHEREAS, on January 6, 2021, the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate were scheduled to convene in Joint Session for the purpose of opening the 2020 presidential election Electoral College votes, certifying their validity, counting them, and declaring the official result of the election for President and Vice President of the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate were acting pursuant to Article II, Section 1 and Amendment XII to the U.S. Constitution, and the Electoral Count Act of 1887; and

WHEREAS, on January 6, 2021, members of the WSBA, along with the American public nationwide, observed the Joint Session of the House of Representatives and the Senate disrupted by violence; and

WHEREAS, members of the WSBA, along with the American public nationwide, observed rioters invade the chambers of the House of Representatives and the Senate; and

WHEREAS, these actions resulted in lawmakers being evacuated; and

WHEREAS, these actions delayed the peaceful democratic processes that characterize our form of government; and

WHEREAS, these actions resulted in the death of U.S. Capitol Police Officer Brian D. Sicknick who was defending our democratic institutions; and

WHEREAS, the disruption of representative government directly impacts the legislative process, practice of law, administration of justice, and rule of law; and

WHEREAS, on January 6, 2021, the WSBA President and Executive Director issued a joint statement on the WSBA website strongly condemning the use of violence to disrupt the congressional certification of the Electoral College vote;

Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Governors of the WSBA that we unequivocally condemn the political violence that disrupted the Joint Session of the U.S. Congress on January 6, 2021; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Board of Governors of the WSBA that the political violence that disrupted the Joint Session of the U.S. Congress on January 6, 2021 strikes at the heart of our representative institutions and constitutional government; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Board of Governors of the WSBA that we call upon all WSBA members and members of the public to recommit to the principles of rule of law and the peaceful transition of power that have characterized presidential transitions in the United States for over 230 years; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Board of Governors of the WSBA that we call upon the members of the Washington congressional delegation of both parties to do their duty without fear or influence from the political violence that took place on January 6, 2021; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Governors hereby extends our deepest and most sincere condolences to the family of U.S. Capitol Police Officer Brian D. Sicknick, and directs the Executive Director of the WSBA to convey this Resolution to the Acting Chief of Police of the United States Capitol Police with a request that it be transmitted to the appropriate family members.

