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ABA Establishes Task Forces to Promote Integrity and Confidence in Elections

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Voting and other forms of participation in the electoral process are declining in Nevada and throughout the country. Diminishing confidence in the integrity of the electoral system may be contributing to this trend.

The American Bar Association recognizes a unique role for lawyers in preserving our democracy and rule of law. Accordingly, it is establishing task forces across the country to promote the rule of law, to encourage civil discourse, and to develop confidence in the integrity of our elections.

With only 18 percent participation by Nevada’s registered voters in this year’s primary election, improving the perceived integrity of our electoral process is critical to the stability of our government institutions

and American life. A Pew Research Center report says that 63 percent of Americans have little or no confidence in the future of the U.S. political system. Only half of the 18-24-year-olds who voted in the 2020 election say they will participate in the 2024 election.

Task forces are being established comprised of prominent lawyers to work with key affinity groups. Primary emphasis is being placed on the seven states that experienced the most controversy after the 2020 presidential election: Georgia, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, Arizona, and Nevada. Although the task force’s main focus is to activate lawyers in their own communities and zones of influence, it will seek to partner with business, educators, the media, civic organizations, and well-established affinity groups to promote understanding and confidence in our electoral process. Hopefully perceived problem areas can be identified as soon as they arise, and rapid responses offered to minimize distrust and prevent further problems.

Listening tours have already been coordinated in several states with discussions on the “Nuts & Bolts of Election Administration,” “Civics and Civility,” and “Increasing Confidence in Our Government and the Electoral Process.” Videos of these programs are available on the ABA’s website (https://www.americanbar.org/groups/leadership/office_of_the_president/american-democracy/listening-tours/).

The Nevada Democracy Task Force is totally non-partisan and hopes to partner with other groups in Nevada with similar concerns and goals. Robert List, a former governor and attorney general, and State Senate Minority Leader Heidi Seevers Gansert are active with Right-Count, a Republican-led entity that is committed to restoring trust in elections. Another group, the Democracy Defense Project, headed by former Governor Brian Sandoval and former Speaker of the State Assembly Richard Perkins, has similar goals. All agree with Governor List’s observation that “if people don’t trust our elections they won’t vote or in other ways participate in elections. If this happens, our whole system can collapse.”

The Nevada Democracy Task Force is an extension of the ABA’s Task Force for American Democracy. For information and to get involved, go to Nevada.Democracy-TaskForce.org.

