

June 4, 2019

Dear Governors:

It is our understanding that the ABA is considering moving its 2021 Midyear Meeting from Orlando to Atlanta. We are writing to urge you to choose a different location, in light of Georgia's new draconian anti-choice legislation that demonstrates a flagrant disregard for the health and lives of women, as well as contempt for medical professionals who face criminal penalties if they perform an abortion after a fetal heartbeat has been detected (which can occur before a woman even knows she is pregnant).

As the nation's largest organization of lawyers, the ABA's presence in a city brings prestige. Our choice of meeting locations should be consistent with the Association's commitment to our values as an organization – defending liberty, pursuing justice, and revering the rule of law - values confirmed through votes of the House of Delegates. Georgia, Alabama, Missouri, and those other states that have rushed to implement these onerous new laws demonstrate contempt for these values, and should not be honored or financially supported by the presence of the ABA mid-year meeting.

It is also confounding that the Board would consider a meeting in Atlanta at a time when the ABA is also focused on membership growth and the attraction of young lawyers. Having a meeting in Atlanta sends a message that the ABA does not live by the principles it celebrates. This is a message more likely to drive away prospective members.

The ABA's decision affects more than money spent by the ABA. Attendees themselves, state and local bars, and other organizations also contribute to the significant costs with their own funds. We should not be asking our members to choose between their principles and their professional interest in participating in the mid-year meeting. If that is the choice we are required to make, however, many of us will choose principle and forego attendance.

Women – and men – around the country are deeply and personally alarmed at the current state of inhumane and unconstitutional laws. The members of the ABA are no different. We urge you to choose another site for the 2021 Midyear Meeting. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

[Please note: The 243 individuals listed below sign this letter in their individual capacities. Titles and organizations are included for identification purposes only.]

Sincerely,

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