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New York County Lawyers Association Issues Report Calling for SCOTUS Code of Ethics

The Board of Directors of the New York County Lawyers Association voted unanimously last night to approve a report calling for the Supreme Court of the United States to adopt a Code of Ethics. The report was prepared by the Association’s Task Force on the Supreme Court and can be accessed [here](#).

“Recent disclosures about Justice Clarence Thomas, involving undisclosed lavish trips and personal real estate transactions with a conservative billionaire, as well as his unexplained decision not to recuse himself in decisions directly impacting his wife, raise obvious issues, but they are far from the only issues raising concerns about the Court,” said Adrienne Koch, NYCLA’s President-Elect. “The Supreme Court is the only federal court in the land which is not subject to a Code of Ethics, and it is time for that to change, “ said Vincent Chang, NYCLA’s President.

The report makes three key recommendations:

1. To help restore confidence, the Supreme Court should subject itself to a Code of Ethics. They can do that very simply, by imposing on themselves the same Code of Conduct for United States Judges as exists for every other federal judge in the country. If the Court won’t do that for itself, Congress should pass legislation requiring it for them.
2. Disclosure rules should be enhanced and enforced, including requiring the forms to be sworn to under penalties of perjury.
3. Provisions should be made requiring a statement of reasons for decisions on recusal, whether granted or not, and there should be provisions made for making motions to recuse.

In this fashion we hope the Supreme Court can begin to recover the public confidence that the Court's politicization, and its secretiveness and lack of transparency, have unfortunately brought about.

About the New York County Lawyers Association

The New York County Lawyers Association (www.nycla.org) was founded in 1908 as one of the first major bar associations in the country that admitted members without regard to race, ethnicity, religion, or gender, and has a long history of supporting the rights of LGBTQ+ people. Since its inception, NYCLA has pioneered some of the most far-reaching and tangible reforms in American jurisprudence. For more information on NYCLA please visit nycla.org.

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