

## THE COALITION OF HOUSTON DIVERSE BAR ASSOCIATIONS Statement Regarding State Bar of Texas Leadership

In the past few weeks, the constituents of the Coalition of Houston Diverse Bar Associations (the “Coalition”) and the general public have learned of statements made by State Bar of Texas President Larry McDougal over the last several years, including statements made during his time as President of the State Bar, concerning the due process of law and presumption of innocence, police brutality, the Black Lives Matter movement, women, and drug addiction that suggest a disregard of the rule of law and legal and professional ethics, display extreme poor judgment, are shocking to the moral conscience, and undermine the State Bar’s commitment to the rule of law.

The Coalition denounces the statements made by Mr. McDougal and believes such statements and Mr. McDougal’s actions and additional statements in response to the public outcry against them illustrate that he is unfit to effectively lead the State Bar of Texas. During these challenging and uncertain times, it is of critical importance that the legal community is guided by inclusive leaders who act as community servants and lead by example consistent with the values of the State Bar of Texas.

The mission of the State Bar of Texas is to “support the administration of the legal system, assure all citizens equal access to justice, foster high standards of ethical conduct for lawyers, enable its members to better serve their clients and the public, educate the public about the rule of law, and promote diversity in the administration of justice and the practice of law.” President McDougal failed to uphold these values, made achievement of this mission more difficult, and demonstrated lack of judgment, making him unfit to effectively lead one of the largest and most diverse bar organizations in the nation. The State Bar of Texas must now commit to upholding these ideals through action.

The Coalition calls on President McDougal to voluntarily resign from his position for the good of the State Bar of Texas and all of its members, and, if necessary, and to the extent possible, for the State Bar of Texas to remove him.

The Coalition also calls on the rest of the leadership of the State Bar of Texas to examine (1) its vetting process for leadership candidates and (2) its policies and procedures to address future conduct by its leaders that is inconsistent with the values and mission of the organization.

The mission of the Coalition is to advance diversity in the legal profession and to address the common concerns and goals of diverse bar associations. The membership of the Coalition includes the Asian American Bar Association of Houston (AABA); the Hispanic Bar Association of Houston (HisBA); the Houston Lawyers Association (HLA); The Korean American Bar Association of Texas (KABAT); the Mexican American Bar Association of Houston (MABAH); the Middle Eastern Bar Association of Texas (MEBA); and the South Asian Bar Association of Houston (SABA).

