Statement of the National Association of Bankruptcy Trustees, National Association of Consumer Bankruptcy Attorneys, National Association of Federal Equity Receivers Regarding the Perilous Condition of Afghanistan Judges

The United States and its allies have for years been mentoring and instructing Afghan men and women in the establishment of a reliable and professional judicial system in a country that has never had such a system. The Taliban has determined that Sharia law prohibits a female from casting judgment on the actions of a male. The penalty is death. Afghan female judges and the male judges who have worked with them are currently being pursued by Taliban militia with the intent of executing them.

The National Association of Bankruptcy Trustees (“NABT”) joins with many other national, state, and local bar associations to call attention to the urgent and critical plight of Afghan judges, particularly women judges, who have been targeted by the Taliban simply for doing their jobs as members of the judiciary and protecting the rule of law. With the recent fall of Kabul, the situation has become perilous and untenable for these many dedicated judges and their families. While we highlight the plight of women judges, we understand that male judges are also being targeted for their collaboration with, and protection of, female judges.

We understand the importance of an independent judiciary to a democratic society. We wish to add our voices to the many legal organizations calling for all governments to do all that is necessary to protect the Afghan judges and their families from execution. Specifically, we believe it is of the utmost urgency that the United States prioritize the immediate evacuation of at least all female Afghan judges out of Afghanistan.

Leslie Gladstone
President, National Association of Bankruptcy Trustees

John Colwell
President, National Association of Consumer Bankruptcy Attorneys

Hernan Serrano
President, National Association of Federal Equity Receivers

ENCLOSURE: Statement of the Federal Judges Association, the Federal Magistrate Judges Association, and the National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges Concerning the Afghan Judiciary
Statement of the Federal Judges Association, the Federal Magistrate Judges Association, and the National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges Concerning the Afghan Judiciary

The Federal Judges Association, the Federal Magistrate Judges Association, and National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges join with many other national, state, and local judges and bar associations to call attention to the urgent and critical circumstances faced by the Afghan judiciary. We recognize and support the call of these brave judges for protection. Their work has been essential to the establishment of a fair and capable national judiciary, and to protecting the rule of law. The threat to women judges is particularly acute. We further recognize that all Afghan people may be at risk.

We also call upon the organized bar and its leaders to move promptly to answer the call for pro bono legal assistance for Afghan judges and their families. To do otherwise will not only harm these judges, but also threaten the independence and safety of judges and judiciaries worldwide.

As members of the federal judiciary, we understand the importance of an independent judiciary to a democratic society. Our organizations are independent, voluntary associations comprising the vast majority of federal judges. The FJA is made up of active, senior, and past United States circuit and district judges, the FMJA is comprised of active, retired, and recalled United States magistrate judges, and the NCBJ is comprised of active, recalled, and retired United States bankruptcy judges.

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