

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **UH Law Center Professor Jefferson says the legal profession should not tolerate lawyer lies in baseless election fraud claims in new essay**

**Nov. 08, 2021** - University of Houston Law Center Professor Renee Knake Jefferson explores the implications of false lawyer claims in politics in a [recently published essay](#) on legal ethics in the Yale Law Journal Forum.

The essay, titled “Lawyer Lies and Political Speech,” was published as part of an invited [collection](#) with contributors including United States Senator Sheldon Whitehouse, Ninth Circuit Judge Margaret McKeown and Michigan Chief Justice Bridget Mary McCormack. In the piece, Jefferson examines legal ethics, elections, professional responsibility, free speech, political speech, the First Amendment and more.

Jefferson notes in the essay that lawyer lies are prevalent in politics regardless of party, however, they became more noticeable during the Trump Era. She specifically examined the aftermath of the 2020 election, which saw numerous baseless claims of voter fraud in an attempt to undermine and overturn the results. Jefferson stated that these kinds of lies risk causing unique, devastating harm to the democracy and should not be tolerated by members of the legal profession or by the public.

“Lawyer lies designed to sabotage valid election results are not protected political speech under the First Amendment,” said Jefferson. “Ethics rules governing candor and frivolous litigation require sanctions, if not disbarment. Moreover, the duty of candor should be extended from the courthouse to the public square when lawyer lies threaten our democracy.”

Furthermore in the essay, Jefferson makes the case for extending the duty of candor to the public square when lawyer lies threaten to deal extreme harm.

An internationally recognized expert on professional responsibility and legal ethics, Jefferson is the author of three casebooks and has had her work cited in briefs before the U.S. Supreme Court as well as in prestigious law reviews. Her work has also appeared in several esteemed media outlets, such as the Associated Press, *Bloomberg Law*, *Chicago Tribune*, CNN, *Houston Chronicle*, the *New York Times*, Politico, the *Wall Street Journal* and more. She is a regular guest on radio and television news shows, including MSNBC and National Public Radio.

Jefferson is a professor of law and the Joanne and Larry Doherty Chair in Legal Ethics at the University of Houston Law Center. She is also the Director of Law Center Outcomes and Assessments. At the Law Center, she teaches constitutional law and professional responsibility in addition to a seminar on gender, law, leadership and power.

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