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Coalition Calls On Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton to Resign From Office After Inciting Violent, Pro-Trump Mob

Austin, TX- The Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club, Public Citizen, Texas Campaign for the Environment, and JOLT, are calling on Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton to resign immediately for his role in spearheading a lawsuit that sought to throw out duly certified votes in states other than Texas, and his specific role in traveling to Washington, DC to spur on a crowd of white supremacist Trump supporters who later stormed the U.S. Capitol in a deadly attack on our country.

We further call on the Texas Legislature, which began its legislative session on January 12th, to fully investigate Paxton for his role in the insurrection, including the use of state funds in the challenge to the Supreme Court, and begin impeachment proceedings under Article 15 of the Texas Constitution should he refuse to resign. Texas should not have a serving elected official who seeks to use a public office to overturn the certified results of elections and the U.S. and Texas Constitution, which he has vowed to uphold.

The deadly event was a result of years of white supremacist propoganda, racist rhetoric, lies, and hatred spewed by Donald Trump, his administration and supporters, including U.S. Senator Ted Cruz and the other 16 Texas Republican members of Congress who voted to overturn the 2020 election results, and Texas' AG Ken Paxton. Each of these instigators must resign or be removed from office.

Ken Paxton's abhorrent speech encouraged the crowd of Trump supporters and armed white supremacists to "not quit fighting." In addition to spurring baseless conspiracies around the election, Paxton pushed the propagandic lie that the same audience he inspired were members of Antifa. The State should not allow or tolerate the Attorney General or any other state official to use their platform to instigate or contribute to acts and rhetoric of white supremacy. From several indictments of fraud to enabling a white supremacist attack in D.C., Paxton has totally disgraced his position as Attorney General.

Cyrus Reed, Interim Director of the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club, said:

"The Texas Legislature has the chance to show the world that we will not put up with insurrectionists who undermine their sworn duty, and use the Office of Attorney General as a mouthpiece for baseless conspiracy theories or even as a dog whistle for white supremacist violence. Texas must be better than this, and it's time for political leadership to show that there

are consequences to abuse of power by stripping Ken Paxton of his office if he won't resign voluntarily."

Antonio Arellano, Jolt Action's Interim Executive Director, said:

"Texans deserve to have leadership that truly reflects the values of our great state, and unfortunately Ken Paxton is far from a model leader. For the six years he has been in office, Ken Paxton has shown blatant disregard for the law he is supposed to be upholding as Texas Attorney General, and last week, Ken Paxton outwardly enabled and helped provoke an attack on our democracy in our nation's capital. Ken Paxton is a total disgrace and he needs to go."

Adrian Shelley, Director of Public Citizen's Texas office said:

"If Ken Paxton had any shame he would resign. Unfortunately, he has proven time and time again that he is shameless, which is why the Texas Legislature must take a stand and vote to impeach him. Texas needs an attorney general who reflects the high standards and character the office demands, not an opportunistic conman who flouts the law, punishes whistleblowers and repeatedly embarrasses the state."

Robin Schneider, Executive Director of Texas Campaign for the Environment stated:

"Attorney General Ken Paxton is wasting taxpayer dollars as he attempted to overturn the votes of other states where people of color voted overwhelmingly for President-elect Biden. This outrageous attempt to overturn the election was unceremoniously dismissed by the U.S. Supreme Court. On January 6th, Paxton was back in Washington DC egging on the crowd gathering to keep fighting. He had the audacity to repeat false claims that the insurrectionists whose actions have resulted in deaths, injuries and an assault on our Capitol were associated with antifa and not Trump supporters. It's clear that Paxton cannot tell the truth from fiction. It's time for him to resign or be impeached by the State Legislature under Article 15 of the Texas Constitution. Our state faces many crises."

It must be made clear that undermining our democracy and supporting white supremacist movements will not be tolerated in Texas government. That is not possible unless Ken Paxton resigns. If he chooses not to step down from office, then the Texas Legislature must take the necessary steps to undertake an impeachment process and remove him from office.

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