

May 19, 2022

The Honorable Merrick Garland
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Garland,

As you know, on May 2, 2022, Politico released a February Supreme Court draft opinion in the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health* case.¹ Immediately upon publication of the draft, various groups and individuals peacefully gathered outside the court to express their support or dissatisfaction with the draft opinion. We support the first amendment rights of free speech and peaceful assembly.

Dangerously, opponents of the draft have released the home addresses of six of the current justices with the message to protest, influence and intimidate them and their families. Several news outlets have reported on events at their homes in both Maryland and Virginia. On Monday, May 9, more than 100 people gathered outside the home of Justice Samuel Alito shouting "Abort the Court"² – a clear threat of violence in violation of federal law. Another protester stated, "His intrusion into our rights deserves some intrusion into his peace and comfort."³

According to a Washington Post editorial,⁴ "The protests are part of a disturbing trend in which groups descend on the homes of people they disagree with and attempt to influence their public conduct by making their private lives — and, often, those of their families and neighbors — miserable. . . . To picket a judge's home is especially problematic. It tries to bring direct public pressure to bear on a decision-making process that must be controlled, evidence-based and rational if there is to be any hope of an independent judiciary. . . ."

The editorial continues, "A federal law — 18 U.S.C. Section 1507 — prohibits 'pickets or parades' at any judge's residence, 'with the intent of influencing' a jurist 'in the discharge of his duty.' These are limited and justifiable restraints on where and how people exercise the right to assembly. Citizens should voluntarily abide by them, in letter and spirit. If not, the relevant governments should take appropriate action."

Because the opinion released by Politico is a draft, it is clear these demonstrations outside the residences of the justices are meant to 'influence' the final outcome of this case. We call upon you to investigate these cases of intimidation of the Judiciary. Prosecute those who violate federal law. It is incumbent upon you to enforce the law and protect the Justices, their families and the U.S. Judicial system.

¹ <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/05/02/supreme-court-abortion-draft-opinion-00029473>

² <https://wtop.com/supreme-court/2022/05/montgomery-county-police-on-protests-outside-homes-of-supreme-court-justices/>

³ <https://www.wusa9.com/article/news/local/virginia/group-hold-vigil-outside-supreme-court-justice-samuel-alitos-home/65-0e70723b-6696-4829-bb56-e9887021c480>

⁴ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2022/05/09/stop-protesting-outside-supreme-court-justice-houses/>

Sincerely,

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