Jun 22, 2021

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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Roundtable with South Fla. Leaders and Venezuelan Exiles to Discuss Dangers of Court Packing



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today held a roundtable discussion with legal leaders including former Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart, Rep. Daniel Perez and Venezuelan Supreme Court Justices in exile. The discussion, held at Florida International University, comes a week before the second meeting of President Joe Biden's Commission on the Supreme Court of the United States. The president's commission is examining the expansion of SCOTUS—a political power-grab maneuver known as court packing, which has led to the demise of democracies around the world.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "This blatant attempt by the Biden administration and members of Congress to pack our nation's highest court is an affront to our democracy. I will continue to do everything in my power to shine a light on this startling political power grab. During today's roundtable discussion, I encouraged participants to submit public comments to President Biden's commission, so members deliberating the merits of expanding the court understand the disastrous effects from manipulating a nation's highest court and that we stand ready to oppose any calculated undermining of American democracy."

Former U.S. Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart said, "It is a privilege for me to be part of the discussion at FIU Law School on the subject of judicial independence and the rule of law,

convened by Florida Attorney General Ashley Moody. Judicial independence and legal certainty are absolutely critical to the rule of law."

Representative Daniel Perez said, "We have seen examples in Latin America and around the world of how altering the judiciary can cause irreparable damage to any working democracy. It is the responsibility of every American to not allow history to repeat itself. Thank you, Attorney General Moody for shedding light on this issue being debated by the Biden Administration. The Supreme Court is the last line of defense in our democracy and we must protect it."

Following a letter from Attorney General Moody reminding the president that all meetings of the newly-created advisory commission must be open to the public in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act, U.S.C. app. 2 § 10(a)(1), the commission opened the inaugural meeting to the public, virtually. For more about Attorney General Moody's letter to the president outlining FACA, click here.

The commission will hold another online meeting June 30. The commission has yet to allow the public to attend in person. Floridians can submit public comments to the commission by clicking here.

Last month, Attorney General Moody submitted public comments imploring the commission to fully examine the consequences of court packing, arguing that changes increasing the size of SCOTUS would undermine the rule of law, respect for the courts, the independence of our judiciary and could lead to devolution of our constitutional system—as seen in many South American nations. To read Attorney General Moody's public comments, click here.

In April, Attorney General Moody led a multistate effort of 20 attorneys general calling on the president and congressional leaders to immediately halt efforts to pack SCOTUS. For more on those efforts, click here.

Today's roundtable discussion is the second meeting to discuss court packing held by Attorney General Moody in South Florida this year. Ahead of the commission's inaugural meeting, Attorney General Moody hosted a roundtable discussion with Venezuelan exiles, including Venezuelan Supreme Court Justices in exile, who fled the country to evade authoritarian rule. The exiles told the Attorney General that court packing was a key component of the totalitarian takeover of Venezuela and has led to the imprisonment and torture of those speaking out against political corruption. For more on the roundtable discussion, click here.