



PRESS RELEASE

AALS Supports Upholding the Rule of Law and Dallas Judge Eric V. Moyé

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 29, 2020

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We are in difficult and changing times - but the principle that all people and institutions are subject and accountable to laws that are fairly applied and enforced remains intact and is essential to our functioning democracy.

Since the beginning of the global pandemic, and in the interest of the health and safety of Texas, Governor Greg Abbott and other government entities have issued various orders closing non-essential businesses and limiting social interaction. Those orders are laws. Within this context, the African-American Lawyers Section of the State Bar of Texas (“AALS”) stands in support of the rule of law, as well as the administration of justice and the enforcement of the law by the Honorable Eric V. Moyé, Presiding Judge of the Fourteenth Judicial District Court of Texas.

Dallas salon owner Shelley Luther openly defied the Governor’s orders to close her non-essential business. When asked to apologize for her defiance of the law, Ms. Luther refused and was adamant that she would continue to operate her non-essential business. After Ms. Luther’s refusal to apologize, Judge Moyé performed his duty and sentenced Ms. Luther to seven days in jail for intentionally refusing to comply with both the Governor’s lawful executive orders and Judge Moyé’s lawful orders.

In the wake of his ruling upholding the rule of law, and despite Governor Abbott’s subsequent amendment of his executive orders removing confinement as a punishment for noncompliance, Judge Moyé was subject to unfair professional and personal attacks by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, U.S. Senator Ted Cruz, President Donald Trump, and many others. Although Judge Moyé is required to remain silent in the face of these unwarranted attacks, we support his actions through this statement. Rather than condone or condemn the acts of Ms. Luther and others for publicly violating a law intended for the safety of the community, we applaud the willingness of Judge Moyé to perform his duty of administering justice, while displaying the courage to face injustice and personal criticism. Those supporting Ms. Luther for trying to do her job should support Judge Moyé for doing his – and for attempting to uphold the ability for us to do ours.

Founded in 1992, the mission of the AALS is to promote the objectives of the State Bar of Texas as they relate to African-American lawyers. The opinions expressed herein are those of the AALS and are not the position of the State Bar of Texas.

Signed,

African-American Lawyers Section of the State Bar of Texas, 2019-2020 Council