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PRESS RELEASE

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Attorney General Brown and Coalition of 17 Attorneys General Release Joint Statement Regarding the Vice President's Comments on Judicial Review

“If a judge tried to tell a general how to conduct a military operation, that would be illegal. If a judge tried to command the attorney general in how to use her discretion as a prosecutor, that’s also illegal. Judges aren’t allowed to control the executive’s legitimate power.” Vice President Vance, February 9, 2025

BALTIMORE, MD (February 14, 2025) – Attorney General Anthony G. Brown today released the following joint statement signed by 17 attorneys general regarding Vice President Vance’s comments on judicial review made on February 9, 2025.

“The Vice President’s statement is as wrong as it is reckless. As chief law enforcement officers representing the people of 17 states, we unequivocally reject the Vice President’s attempt to spread this dangerous lie.

“Judges do not ‘control’ executive power. Judges stop the unlawful and unconstitutional exercise of power. As Chief Justice Marshall said in *Marbury v. Madison* over 200 years ago, ours is ‘a government of laws, and not of men,’ and that ‘it is emphatically the province and duty of the judicial department to say what the law is.’ For those who value the original intent of the founders and our legal traditions, nothing is more firmly rooted in our legal history, tradition, and the original intent of the founders than the power of judges to stop the executive from breaking the law.

“Americans understand the principle of checks and balances. The judiciary is a check on unlawful action by the executive and legislative branches of government. Generals, prosecutors, and all public officials are subject to checks and balances. No one is above the law.

“As Attorneys General, we will carefully scrutinize each and every action taken by this administration. If the Constitution or federal law is violated, we will not hesitate to act.

“That is why we have already filed motions in courts across this country to seek temporary restraining orders and injunctions blocking the unlawful and unconstitutional executive orders

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and actions, including those to ban birthright citizenship; indiscriminately freeze federal funding; cap vital medical research dollars; and grant unauthorized disclosure of Americans' private records and data.

“Judges granted our motions and issued restraining orders to protect the American people, democracy, and the rule of law. That is and has always been their job. That job is the very core of our legal system. And in this critical moment, we will stand our ground to defend it.”

Joining Attorney General Brown in releasing this statement are the attorneys general of Arizona, California, Connecticut Delaware, Hawai'i, Illinois, Massachusetts, Maine, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington.

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