



University of Idaho

College of Law

Dear Friends,

June is normally my favorite month in North Idaho. For those of you who haven't experienced it, life gets noticeably quieter, and the hills gradually turn innumerable shades of green. But today, as I look out at those rolling green hills, a contrast strikes me. Not the contrast of pines, hills, and sky I dearly love, but the contrast between that serenity and the sadness, chaos, and uncertainty many of our friends, family, and colleagues are living in cities across the country; cities that are home to many of you, many of your families. I find myself apologizing to my sons a lot lately, apologizing for the world I am leaving them.

I have no wisdom for this moment, no life experience that would cause me fear and frustration, and thus understanding. Even when walking dark streets in the wrong part of town in a foreign country, I never worried that it was the people sworn to protect me that might cause me harm. Many of you have felt that fear. And I am sorry, sorry for the world I've helped create for you.

What I do have is a sacred calling to uphold the rule of law. I became a lawyer because I thought that I could change the world, that I could play a role in restoring freedom to the oppressed, in ensuring that this country continues to honor its promise to all, to treat all people equally, whatever their origins or beliefs. So even if I cannot offer wisdom, I can offer support and a renewed commitment to those ideals and my calling as a lawyer.

Please remember, as I have said to many of you before, the law is not words on a page, it is who we are, where we live, and how we relate to each other. The law is the very fabric from which we weave the tapestry of our world. And you all, as future lawyers, are the weavers, the creators, the architects, the builders, and perhaps most important, the visionaries. It is you who will protect liberty, ensure justice, avoid tyranny, and create the world that people want to live in.

Please find hope in that future, in the life you will lead and the world you can create. We have all lived different lives, but we are all committed to a better future for ourselves, our families, and our friends.

Please take care, and God bless.

Jerry

JERROLD LONG, Ph.D., J.D.
Dean and Professor of Law

