



**SURVEY REPORT : Q4 2018**

# **BUSINESS LEADERS ON AN INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY**

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**▶ BUSINESS FORWARD**

# INTRODUCTION

**Business Forward has worked with more than 100,000 business leaders across the U.S.** We cover a range of issues, including health care, education reform, tax reform, trade, infrastructure, clean energy, intellectual property, and immigration. We organize local roundtables, Washington fly-ins, national conference calls, and training webinars. We also help business leaders work with local media, publish op-eds, and submit testimony to government agencies. More than 650 mayors, governors, Members of Congress, and senior Administration officials have participated in our briefings.

**Business leaders in our network have recently expressed concern over the attacks President Trump and some in Congress are leveling at America's judiciary.** These business leaders can abide politicians questioning a judge's reasoning, but they draw the line at questioning that judge's authority.

**Last month, we asked our network to tell us what they think about recent attacks on the judiciary by Members of Congress and the President.** Is today's rhetoric something we should worry about? How could a weaker, politicized judiciary affect business?

**More than 1,000 business leaders responded to our request, and 340 of them provided personal statements on the topic.**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

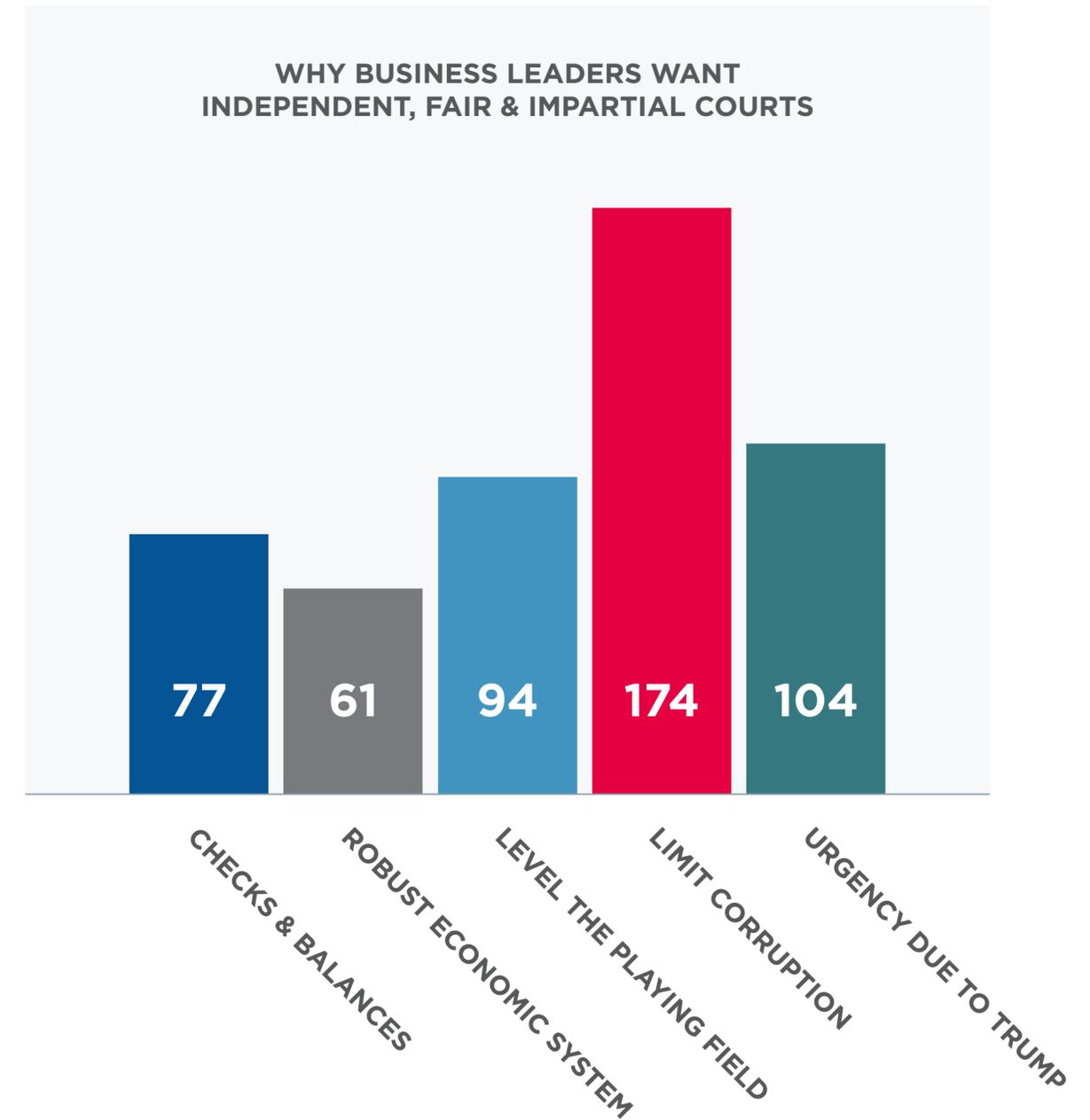
**Our independent, fair and impartial courts are integral to our system of checks & balances.** Almost a quarter of comments cited the importance of an independent judiciary to the U.S. system of government under the Constitution.

**Our courts are the foundation of a robust economic system.** One in five comments cited the importance of an independent judiciary to the U.S. economy, including our reputation around the world as a fair, business-friendly, and competitive place to invest.

**Our courts level the playing field for small businesses.** Nearly three in 10 comments noted that courts protect small businesses from larger companies and from unreasonable government interference.

**Respecting the rule of law limits corruption.** More than half of our business leaders' comments noted the importance of an independent judiciary to limit corruption in government.

**Protecting the courts is urgent because of the actions of this Administration & Congress.** Almost a third of business leaders noted that the risk of corruption and unreasonable interference is higher today than in previous Administrations.



# INDEPENDENT COURTS ARE INTEGRAL TO OUR SYSTEM OF CHECKS & BALANCES

Business leaders value our courts – and the rule of law they provide – as critical to the U.S. Constitution’s system of checks and balances, and foundational to our democracy and economy.

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**A thriving free American economy requires that the citizenry have freedom. Our checks and balances system also requires that all three parties, executive, legislative and judicial, be independent and strong. The alternative, tyranny, would kill our economy and our nation.**

”

**- GUSTAVO SEGREDO**  
CEO/PRESIDENT, GES SOLUTIONS LLC,  
FREEPORT, NY

“

**The judiciary is very important. That’s why this country was created with a Separation of Powers and Checks and Balances.**

”

**- NOAM KOGEN**  
PRESIDENT,  
KOGEN’S FINANCIAL SERVICES, LLC,  
NEW YORK, NY

“

**Without fair, non-partisan courts, there can be no real democracy. We must be able to trust our judicial system.**

”

**- PATRICIA FLYNN-WILLIAMS**  
MIDLAND, TX

“

**An independent judiciary is essential in preserving and maintaining a balance of power and preventing abuses by the executive and/or legislative branches of our government.**

”

**- KATHRYN WACHSMAN**  
VICE PRESIDENT,  
JMD BUILDING PRODUCTS LLC,  
NEW YORK, NY

“

**We need unbiased courts to interpret any given case, not to make law, but interpret. This keeps us balanced and fair as a society.**

”

**- MAME AUMENT**  
ASSOCIATE INVENTORY MGT,  
INTRAWEST LLC,  
FRASER, CO

# OUR COURTS ARE THE FOUNDATION OF A ROBUST ECONOMIC SYSTEM

Business leaders appreciate that the judicial system provides trust in the American economic system. Businesses expect that contracts will be respected, that debts will be honored, and that competition will be fair. Capitalism thrives when the rule of law offers stability and transparency.

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**Consistency is necessary for smooth business. Fair, honest, kind and intelligent law-abiding judges and court systems are key.**  
”

- MARK WILSON  
PRYOR, OK

“  
**Business needs stability and predictability. Why should we invest in a society if we don't get the guarantees we need to develop business?**  
”

- DR. WALTER MAISEL  
PRESIDENT, SERAPH,  
TROY, MI

“  
**We have to be able to trust all of our contracts. Trust, trust, trust.**  
”

- ANNE CHEW  
OWNER, ACU-CHOICE HEALTH CARE,  
EVERGREEN, CO

“  
**An independent court system is one of the pillars of a free society and a prosperous economy. Businesses thrive when our democratic institutions are protected, and without protections from the courts, our economy and free market society starts crumbling. We business owners demand that Congress defend America's courts. It's your sworn constitutional duty. Now go do it!**  
”

- MILLIE HERRERA  
PRESIDENT, THE MIAMI GROUP & ASSOCIATES,  
MIAMI, FL

“  
**I've done business all over the world. The US is still near the top of business-friendly countries, thanks, in large measure, to its long-established history of respecting and upholding the law.**  
”

- RICHARD ROBERTSON  
DIRECTOR, SYBRO GLOBAL,  
DENVER, CO

# OUR COURTS LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD FOR SMALL BUSINESSES AND ENSURE FAIR TREATMENT

An independent court system protects small businesses when the government overreaches or big businesses abuse their market position. Small businesses depend on the courts to clarify the law, protect their rights in the marketplace and make sure everyone is treated fairly under the law.

“ Without a rule of law, illegal activity can thrive and drive smaller businesses out, creating monopolies, cartels, and organized crime. ”

- DON POSH  
OWNER, POSH DESIGNS LASER ART STUDIO,  
SPOONER, WI

“ Our courts protect individuals so they can be thriving entrepreneurs, workers and consumers. Lawlessness brings chaos. ”

- NOELLE AWALEGAONKAR  
OWNER, NEOLLEGACY LLC,  
FREDERICKSBURG, VA

“ Courts gave African Americans freedom, women rights, the ADA etc. When the federal government or states wouldn't do the right thing the courts have generally been on the side of right based on the constitutional freedoms folks have been given. ”

- MANETRIC DOUGLAS  
INDIANAPOLIS, IN

“ The courts protect copyrights, they protect human rights, and they handle and understand how laws are created. The courts clarify laws for our understanding and compliance. ”

- JERRY HICKS  
ORLANDO, FL

“ [Courts] make all equal in doing business. We cannot do fair business without rules. ”

- ELLEN REA  
PEACHTREE CITY, GA

“ There needs to be a buffer between government and businesses, otherwise the governments will run roughshod over them, especially the more vulnerable small businesses. Without this way for businesses to protect themselves, there would be small incentive to even start a business. ”

- GC DAVIS  
SAN JOSE, CA

# RESPECTING THE RULE OF LAW LIMITS CORRUPTION

Business leaders respect the role of the courts in limiting corruption and self-dealing. Honest businesses can't operate in a lawless society.

“ Packing the courts with partisans works against fairness, thus opening our judicial system to graft and favoritism. ”

- JOHN MARTINSON  
FOUNDER & CONSULTANT,  
CHINA MIST TEA COMPANY,  
PARADISE VALLEY, AZ

“ We need to be protected with equal justice for all. Race, religion, rich or poor should not play into the outcome of a situation. ”

- HELEN MEACHAM  
GREENVILLE, SC

“ The rule of law is critical for the proper working of our country. If laws are not properly enforced in country and society there will be chaos. It will make it easier for a Dictator to impose rules on our country that will curtail the proper functioning of our Democracy. ”

- PRADIP KAMAT  
PRESIDENT & CEO,  
INDUS INTERNATIONAL INC.,  
BEACHWOOD, OH

“ There should be only one system. An equal system. Not one for the 'haves' and another for the 'have nots'. ”

- STEVE OTTO  
SAINT JAMES, MN

“ Why should I pay my taxes if the White House can look past court orders they don't like? ”

- JOHN DUFFY  
MANAGER, EASTERLY RESEARCH,  
WARMINSTER, PA

“ Due to the huge diversity of people we need an unbiased court system to keep this country running as fairly as possible. ”

- DR. JOAN MCGREGOR  
WICHITA, KS

# PROTECTING THE COURTS IS URGENT BECAUSE OF THE ACTIONS OF THIS ADMINISTRATION & CONGRESS

Business leaders are sending a strong message: The President is not above the law and Congress must protect the independence of the courts. America's reputation as a respected, business-friendly economy is at risk.

“ **No one is above the law. Not Congress, not the President! All three aspects of our government MUST remain equal or our Democracy is doomed!** ”

- DAN FITZGERALD  
MARSHALL, WI

“ **If you can't trust the administration or congress to defend us, we need the courts in order to preserve our democracy!** ”

- DONNA LUCERO  
LITTLETON, CO

“ **The Founders had the genius to balance the power in three branches. Trump should be impeached if he even THREATENS to violate it!** ”

- MICHAEL PIGO-CRONIN  
DOCTOR, CAPITAL DISTRICT  
PSYCHIATRIC CENTER, HYANNIS, MA

“ **We must maintain the rule of law in this country and our Constitutional right to a fair and speedy trial. The current administration would like to do away with all rule of law and Trump wants to dictate how things are run. He must be stopped. The rule of law must be maintained.** ”

- MARLYN NEARY  
COLEBROOK, NH

“ **America's courts are meant for blind justice to be served to the citizenry (the people) - not the elite and special few. Today not a one of the Judicial, Executive or Legislative is working as should. Congress over-steps their bounds from legislative responsibilities, we have a President who thinks he is above the law and wants to be a 'forever President' - called dictatorship. We have a struggling Judiciary because of all the pressure being put on them to adhere to someone else's agenda and the threat of losing their jobs.** ”

- C COX  
KALAMA, WA

“ **Judges should not be bullied and threatened by higher offices, especially from the President's office.** ”

- BEATRICE ROLLAND  
BUSINESS OWNER,  
ELKINS PARK, PA



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