

Eight Republican AGs Express Concerns About Perceived Liberal Partisanship at NAAG

WRITTEN BY

Stephen C. Piepgrass | Ashley L. Taylor, Jr. | Ketan D. Bhirud

On May 24, Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron sent a letter to the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG), expressing concerns about perceived partisanship. Joined by the attorneys general of Alaska, Florida, Louisiana, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Utah, and Virginia, the letter explains that these eight attorneys general believe “NAAG needs structural reform [t]o avoid partisanship” and “greater transparency prior to [] receiving, holding, and expending certain kinds of funds.” The attorneys general also worry about “increasingly partisan programming, and the seeming exclusion of conservative members in favor of more liberal ones.” They explain these concerns have “resulted in NAAG’s promotion of ‘entrepreneurial litigation’ and ‘suing businesses for profit,’ all of which is ‘more in line with the plaintiffs’ bar’ than making whole those who have been harmed.” They have requested that NAAG respond to these concerns by June 6.

The attorneys general propose several structural reforms intended to ensure true bipartisanship, including (1) rotating the presidency annually with the president and president-elect being of different political parties, (2) comprising the executive committee of a majority of members of a political party different from that of the president, (3) selecting the finance committee chair from a different political party than the president, and (4) having the president and the president-elect work collaboratively on programming.

They also take issue with how NAAG receives and expends funds, citing NAAG’s receipt of \$15 million from the McKinsey opioid settlement (nearly double the amounts received by some states) and their belief that NAAG has sometimes excluded Republicans from its fund committees. In further support of the proposed reforms, the attorneys general note that while there currently are 27 Republican and 23 Democrat attorneys general, nine of the 12 executive committee members are Democrats.

The letter follows the withdrawal of the Republican attorneys general of Arizona, Missouri, Montana, and Texas from the NAAG earlier this month, preceded by Alabama last year because of similar concerns about a perceived leftward shift.

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