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It's gratifying—and humbling, actually—to be here with you.

As some of you know, I was in an unusual hurry to leave the Annual Meeting right after the gavel fell. My wife Jan and I were heading nonstop to England, where I would play in a golf tournament between American lawyers and British barristers.

It would be my last chance of freedom before taking on the many responsibilities that lay ahead.

Like many of you, I was riding high from all the goodwill, great ideas, and important action from San Francisco. I was looking forward to some good golf.

Then we got to the golf course

We Yanks got creamed. And I got a good dose of humility.

It's good to be back home. And it's great to be here with you.

(See over)

As I said in San Francisco, the office of President- ~~ELECT~~
~~IS NOT MINE TO OWN, OR EVEN LEASE FOR A YEAR. IT~~
~~ELECT~~ belongs to you—to all of our sections, divisions,
and forums—to all of our members. Like those before me,
I merely have the opportunity to briefly ~~serve as a~~ ^{hold it in}
trustee—with our members as the beneficiaries.

^{EASY TO MAKE \$, HARD TO MAKE A Δ}
We have so much to highlight throughout the ABA.

And we have so much to build on.

Working together, we can make a difference.

Our sections, divisions, and forums provide a wealth
of programs and resources that are ^{RELEVANT} ~~suite~~ for lawyers in
their particular practices. It's why I'm a proud section
member myself.

At the same time, we're seeing an unprecedented
atmosphere of cooperation and collaboration throughout
the ABA that reaches across section lines. ^{AND BENEFITS US}

We need to encourage this. We need to nurture this. ^{ALL}

President Neukom is encouraging and nurturing this
trend, as is Executive Director White. So is the Board of

Governors. And I've been hearing a lot of enthusiasm and great ideas ^{FROM MANY OF YOU.} ~~about collaboration and cooperation among section officers.~~

Though we come from dozens of entities with focused interests, my goal—with your help—is to focus on what unites us as lawyers, our common core values.

We've started gathering your ideas so that the ABA president can underscore your important work and be a partner in your efforts. And we will continue to gather your ideas. We want to hear from you about how we can leverage our efforts and collaborate on common values and common goals.

Working together, we will focus on the ABA's programs and activities that are central to our core values—particularly as they relate to ^{THE FOUR AREAS I IDENTIFIED BEFORE} access to justice, independence of the bar and judiciary, diversity in the legal profession, and strengthening the rule of law throughout the world, including here at home.

We will emphasize that our profession is a shared calling—among American lawyers and our international partners.

We will trumpet the idea that the rule of law matters—not only to lawyers, but to all people in all professions and all walks of life.

We will call attention to the good work lawyers are doing to support the profession, to pursue justice, and to enrich their communities.

We will draw from powerful existing initiatives that complement our core values—like the American Jury Project, the Renaissance of Idealism, Second Season of Service, Youth at Risk, the World Justice Project, and others.

We will shine a spotlight on the valuable resources in our sections, divisions, and forums that illustrate how the ABA helps lawyers make a difference.

And we will be prepared—working together—to handle challenges that invariably arise during a president's term. In recent years, our sections, divisions, and forums have ~~definitely~~ ^{TOGETHER} mobilized with the ABA president to respond forcefully to 9-11, to Hurricane Katrina, to excesses in the war on terrorism, and to other tests of our resolve.

We know we will face similar challenges in the future.

We will face them together.

And we will show the world how lawyers make a difference.

Soon, we'll be in the thick of national and state election campaigns, and a fresh administration will be in the White House.

We can work together on ways to blunt the invariable attacks on our judiciary. We can work together to advocate anew in Washington for the issues our profession holds dear.

The ABA's diverse programming gives value to our members. And we also focus on the concerns we all share: concerns like preserving the attorney-client privilege, fighting for legal aid funding, working to curb politics and partisanship in judicial selection, ensuring that all men and women of diverse backgrounds have access to our justice system and our profession.

And promoting the rule of law.

Many of you are working hard on these efforts in your sections. Please share with us how we can best collaborate and cooperate on them.

We have a lot to highlight. And we have a lot to build on.

Let's focus on our common vision as lawyers to make the ABA and the legal profession more vibrant and more relevant than ever.

Let's work together.

Let's make a difference.