



PRESS RELEASE

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AAJLJ APPLAUDS SUPREME COURT DECISION UPHOLDING ABILITY OF AMERICAN VICTIMS OF FOREIGN TERRORISM TO SUE OVER “PAY FOR SLAY” PROGRAM

Washington, DC, June 20, 2025... The American Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists ("AAJLJ") applauds today's unanimous decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in the cases *Fuld v. PLO* and *U.S. v. PLO*, upholding the ability of American victims of foreign terrorism to sue the Palestine Liberation Organization ("PLO") and Palestinian Authority ("PA") in U.S. federal courts.

As an organization that represents the human rights interests of the American Jewish community under the mission statement "Justice, Justice Shall You Pursue" (Deuteronomy 16:20), AAJLJ is proud to have joined a brief alongside sixteen other amicus groups in advocating for victims of terrorism seeking justice.

AAJLJ President Robert Garson said, "The meaning of the decision is straightforward – it protects American victims of terrorism's right to seek justice in American courts. Congress passed multiple statutes specifically to ensure that they could do so, and the Supreme Court has now authoritatively affirmed that Congress was serving a compelling interest when it took that action."

In today's decision, the high court found that the Promoting Security and Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act (PSJVTA), enacted by Congress in 1990, properly extended personal jurisdiction over the PLO and PA. In an Opinion of the Court joined by six other justices, Chief Justice John Roberts wrote that the statute did not violate the Fifth Amendment's Due Process Clause because the statute "reasonably ties the assertion of federal jurisdiction over the PLO and PA to conduct that involves the United States and implicates sensitive foreign policy matters within the prerogative of the political branches." Indeed, Chief Justice Roberts also wrote, "... the Federal

Government has *an exceedingly compelling interest*, as part of its comprehensive efforts to deter international terrorism, in providing a forum for American victims to hold the perpetrators of... acts [of terrorism] accountable.” [emphasis supplied]

In a separate opinion, Justice Clarence Thomas, joined by Justice Neil Gorsuch, concurred in the judgment of the Court while coming to that result through another approach.

The amicus brief joined by AAJLJ in February traced the long history of the PLO and PA’s system for rewarding and encouraging terrorism through compensation and stipends, often referred to as “Pay for Slay.” The brief also examined the various laws and institutions that make up this terror program, how it grew over time into an entrenched bureaucracy, and how, in maintaining a structure that offers terrorists “martyrdom” and financial benefits to their families, the PLO and PA have created a brutal cycle of violence. Moreover, the brief paid respects to the many victims of PLO and PA terrorism, including several Americans, both Jewish and non-Jewish. In an argument now vindicated by the Supreme Court, AAJLJ’s amicus brief maintained that PSJVTA was constitutional as a fair and reasonable means to combat foreign terrorism.

AAJLJ today reiterates its thanks to Mark Pinkert, Jason Torchinsky, Erielle Davidson, and Jared Bauman from the law firm of Holtzman Vogel Baran Torchinsky & Josefiak, as well as Scott Whitman, Craig Unterberg, and Leel Sinai from the law firm Haynes & Boone, for their impressive work on the brief. We are grateful as well to the sixteen other amicus groups -- representing a wide range of political views and interests -- that joined the brief. In so doing, these groups came together to speak clearly against the PLO and PA’s support for terrorism and in favor of justice for the victims. And today we have all come together not only to help secure a victory for the claimants, who may now proceed with their case, but have also paved the way for future claims against supporters and sponsors of terrorism.

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