The American Bar Association has long held the tradition that lawyers have an important role to play in framing the legal debate on issues of importance to our nation. The intersection of law and national security has become one of the most contested issues in the past century as Americans struggle to protect our Constitutional values.

I commend the ABA Standing Committee on Law and National Security for assembling some of the brightest minds in national security and privacy today and presenting this series of debates on topics that will define our nation for decades to come.

As lawyers, it is important that we speak out on issues that traditionally define us as Americans and affect the rights and liberties of all. To speak out effectively, we must examine both sides of complex national security issues to fully comprehend the stakes. Patriots Debate: Contemporary Issues in National Security Law presents this balanced view.

The Committee’s mission of achieving national security under law has never been more important. I offer warm greetings to the Standing Committee on the occasion of its 50th-year anniversary and congratulations on this important debate.