



Media Contact: Abbey Bueche
LACDL Account Manager
(225) 767-7640
LACDL@tatmangroup.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Louisiana Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (LACDL) to Continue Fighting for Fairness

Baton Rouge, La. (April 20, 2020) - Today, in *Ramos v. Louisiana*, the U.S. Supreme Court held that less-than-unanimous verdicts in state criminal trials violate the Constitution. In a 6-3 opinion by Justice Gorsuch released today, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Ramos v. Louisiana*, held that the Sixth Amendment right to a jury trial, as incorporated against the states, requires a unanimous verdict to convict a defendant of a serious offense.

In November 2018, Louisiana citizens voted to amend the state constitution to require unanimous jury verdicts moving forward. This was a result of a proposed constitutional amendment brought to the state Legislature by LACDL and partners through the Unanimous Jury Coalition, including the Promise of Justice Initiative, Voice of the Experienced, Southern Poverty Law Center, ACLU of Louisiana, Capital Appeals Project, and so many others. LACDL is eternally grateful to former Senator J.P. Morrell for carrying the torch of this legislation.

The *Ramos v. Louisiana* ruling brings hope to thousands in Louisiana who were wrongfully convicted by non-unanimous juries. Evidence shows that when a unanimous decision is required, jurors evaluate evidence more thoroughly, spend more time deliberating, and are more likely to consider all viewpoints. It is our intent to continue fighting for true fairness by working to address the retroactivity of this ruling.

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About LACDL

LACDL was formed by a group of criminal defense lawyers in 1985. Almost three decades later and with more than 600 members throughout Louisiana, it remains a vital cornerstone of support for the criminal defense bar. Membership in LACDL means joining your fellow defenders in the struggle for liberty, individual rights, the basic principle of due process and the fundamental right to a fair trial. LACDL affords its members the opportunity to network with peers who share in the passion to protect individual rights and those of the accused. For more information, please visit www.lacdl.org, email lacdl@tatmangroup.com, or call the LACDL office at (225)767-7640.