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### Dean A. Benjamin Spencer: A Message to the William & Mary Law School Community About Events on January 6 in Washington, D.C.

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**Dean A. Benjamin Spencer: A Message to the William & Mary Law School Community About Events on January 6 in Washington, D.C.**

By A. Benjamin Spencer

January 6, 2021

*A message from Dean and Chancellor Professor of Law A. Benjamin Spencer.*

To Members of the William & Mary Law School Community:

The unfolding events today in Washington, D.C. have been extremely distressing. I am astonished that the seat of our government has been overrun by groups of armed extremists seeking to disrupt our democracy and the rule of law.

None of us should sit by and be silent in the face of such a disgrace. We may have our views and our disagreements; part of what makes a democracy strong is the freedom to voice dissent. Indeed, informed discourse is the hallmark of university education and of the legal training that William & Mary Law School seeks to provide. But resorting to what amounts to a violent insurrection against lawful authorities is in no sense a legitimate means of furthering one's views.

As the leader of America's first law school, an institution that for nearly 250 years has sought to educate citizen-lawyers who will contribute positively to our democracy, I must condemn in the strongest terms the violent breaching and occupation of our U.S. Capitol and the disruption of the process of certifying the votes of the Electoral College. There is no room for such displays in our democracy.



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In face of these events, we must hold fast to our commitment to the rule of law and not shirk from our duty to uphold it. Although our heads may be bloodied from this sad day, I encourage us to keep them unbowed. Our nation will come together and move past this if people of good faith stand firm on our principles and speak up for them in times like these.

Stay strong & keep the faith,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Spencer', written in a cursive style.

A. Benjamin Spencer | Dean & Chancellor Professor  
William & Mary Law School