



**South
Carolina
Bar**



AMERICAN **BAR** ASSOCIATION

Division for Public Education



THE HONORABLE J. MARK HAYES, II STATEWIDE LAW DAY ESSAY CONTEST

Sponsored by the SC Bar Senior Lawyers Division

2025 Awards Packet

Open to all 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th Grade Public, Private, and Homeschool Students

THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION'S LAW DAY 2025 THEME

The 2025 Law Day theme will be "The Constitution's Promise: Out of Many, One." The Constitution enshrines our collective responsibility to one another, and the 2025 Law Day theme urges us to take pride in a constitution that bridges our differences to bring us together as a united nation. Our civic lives tie us together as one "We," whether through legislative efforts that serve the common good, through military service, or by working together, every day, to fulfill the promise of "E pluribus unum," or "Out of Many, One."

WHAT IS LAW DAY?

Established by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1958, Law Day celebrates the American heritage of liberty, justice and equality under the law. In 1961, Congress issued a joint resolution designating May 1 as the official date for celebrating Law Day. Every year, Law Day provides legal professionals and others with opportunities to help students and the public understand how the law protects our freedoms.

2025 LAW DAY ESSAY TOPIC INTRODUCTION

ABA President Bill Bay announced the 2025 Law Day theme, "The Constitution's Promise: Out of Many, One". President Bay, in his Law Day address, emphasized that the Preamble to the Constitution was established on behalf of "We the People" to form a more perfect union. He highlights our shared responsibilities under the Constitution and democratic norms that unite us as one citizenry. He urges pride in the 2025 Law Day theme, which celebrates how the Constitution bridges our differences and fosters unity through civic duties like government service and community programs.

President Bay states, "I am thrilled to announce the 2025 Law Day theme, 'The Constitution's Promise: Out of Many, One.' When I was in grade school, I first heard the phrase 'E pluribus unum' and learned it meant out of many, one. It's on the Great Seal of the United States, as well as the seals of each of our three branches of government, but I never quite appreciated what it meant and how important it is. I do now. When our Republic was founded, there were profound differences and approaches to the problems of a young nation. History suggests there was doubt as to whether they could create one country, one union out of many, but they found a way to bridge their differences, and the Constitution was agreed to. It has stood the test of time. Today we are larger and more diverse than the framers could have imagined. We have new challenges that threaten to divide us. It will take all of us to address those challenges and to ensure that those words I learned long ago still have meaning. This is the time to celebrate the Constitution's bold assertion – "We the People...form a more perfect Union." Indeed, there is no better time than now as our nation looks ahead to the 250th birthday of the Declaration of Independence.

President Dwight Eisenhower first established Law Day in 1958 as a national observation to advance representative government and the rule of law. It is what we believe in. This Law Day, we explore and renew our obligations to one another under the Constitution and our democratic norms, including as one nation under law. The Constitution enshrines our collective responsibilities to one another – an obligation we strive to meet each day. It contains a framework for government that provides limits and guardrails. It reflects a commitment to unity as we all provide for the common good. Our Law Day theme urges us to take pride in a constitution that bridges our differences to bring us together as one nation. The ABA encourages all Americans to join in recognizing Law Day on May 1, 2025. Let's renew our collective commitment to one great Union. It is the promise of 'E pluribus unum' – out of many, one." To learn more about Law Day and promote "Out of Many, One," visit LawDay.org.

2025 LAW DAY ESSAY TOPIC

Each student participant must write an essay of **1,000 words or less** on this topic:

The founding fathers used the phrase “We The People” as the first words in the Preamble to the Constitution. The Great Seal of the United States contains the phrase “E Pluribus Unum” – Out of Many, One. Discuss the importance or relationship of the two phrases.

Suggested Approaches (these are only suggestions; the student is encouraged to be creative to develop their own approach to the topic).

- Discuss how a citizen’s participation in a government service or community program helps unite people.
- Discuss a Constitutional amendment that helped bridge differences among citizens.
- Discuss how adherence to the Rule of Law helps with achieving the Constitution’s goal of “A More Perfect Union.”

ESSAY DIRECTIONS

Each essay writer is required to adhere to the following:

- 1) Submit a typewritten essay in a 12-point font and include all attached documents:
 - The student’s name, home address, home phone number, and grade level
 - Essay title
 - School name, address, phone number, and educator’s name (if applicable)
 - Name of local newspaper(s)
 - Documentation of all research on the enclosed “Works Cited” page or an attached sheet (if applicable)
- 2) Forward all to an English, Language Arts (ELA) or Social Studies (SS) teacher to submit the given essays and application forms.
- 3) **DO NOT PUT THE STUDENT’S NAME ON THE ESSAY ITSELF.**

SELECTION CRITERIA

Each English, Language Arts and/or Social Studies teacher may submit two (2) essays per grade level from his or her respective school for consideration for the pre-selection judging. However, more than (2) essays may be submitted if it is the teacher's opinion that additional essays are worthy of consideration. The essays will be read and assessed by Judge Hayes and members of the South Carolina Circuit Court Judges Association. The overall winner, their family, and teacher will be invited to the South Carolina Bar Annual Convention where the student will be recognized.

All public school, private school and home-schooled participants' essays must be submitted to Judge Mark Hayes by **noon on Friday, May 30, 2025**. All essays along with the appropriate cover sheets are to be submitted to the following address:

Judge J. Mark Hayes, II
Spartanburg County Courthouse
180 Magnolia Street
Spartanburg, SC 29306
Office: (864) 562-4144 Fax: (864) 562-4142

AWARDS

9 th Grade	\$500
10 th Grade	\$500
11 th Grade	\$500
12 th Grade	\$500
Overall Winner	\$1,000

Cash awards, medals and certificates will be presented to the recipients. Winning essays may be submitted to the newspaper for publication and also to other organizations for possible publication and release to the general public. By entering the essay contest, your consent is assumed for publication of your winning essay, your name, teacher, and school. If you do not wish for your winning essay and name to be published, please "X" the box on the cover sheet. The annual statewide Law Day Essay Contest is sponsored by the SC Bar Senior Lawyers Division.

ESSAYS FROM PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

Students from participating schools will submit essays to a school official (teacher, administrator, etc.) for pre-selection.

School submissions should include:

- 1) Essays and corresponding entry forms, including any source citations and parental release forms (if applicable);
- 2) A list of all other students who prepared essays for this contest. (Judge Hayes would like to recognize the efforts of all participants).

ESSAYS FROM STUDENTS WHOSE SCHOOLS ARE NOT PARTICIPATING OR WHO ARE HOMESCHOOLED

Students whose schools are not participating or who are not affiliated with a school may send entries directly to Judge Hayes for consideration.

- 1) Essays and corresponding entry forms, including any source citations and parental release forms (if applicable);
- 2) A student who is affiliated with a non-participating school or class must provide the school's name, address, telephone number, and indicate on the form that the school or class is not participating.

Essay Title: _____ **Entry #:** _____

2025 Law Day Essay Contest Judging Criteria

The Constitution's Promise: Out of Many, One

Assign a point value (1 – 10) to each of the following questions. One point indicates the lowest mark and 10 is the highest.

Structure/Content

- _____ Does the essay contain an introduction, a descriptive body and a conclusion?
- _____ Is the data correct and in a clear and logical and/or sequential order?
- _____ Does the essay exhibit good language skills: proper spelling, syntax and grammar?
- _____ Are the references to sources (Constitution, Bill of Rights, cases, etc.) correct?

Creativity/Originality

- _____ Does the essay have some sense of originality and creativity?
- _____ Are the ideas good and well-developed?
- _____ Does the essay creatively develop the theme and does not deviate?
- _____ Does the essay contain the writer's personal views and comments?

General Appearance

- _____ Is the format neat/typed or written legibly?
- _____ Is the cover sheet attached and correct?

_____ **Total Points (100 points maximum)**

C O V E R S H E E T

2025 Law Day Essay Contest

DEADLINE: May 30, 2025 AT NOON

A copy of this sheet must accompany each essay submitted in the 2025 Law Day Essay Contest. All of the information on this sheet must be completed and must not appear on the essay.

Entry Number: _____ (will be assigned by Law Day Essay Contest Committee)

Please PRINT all information in blue ink.

Grade Category: Grade 9 _____ Grade 10 _____ Grade 11 _____ Grade 12 _____

ESSAY TITLE: _____

Student's Name: _____

Student's Address: _____
(Street/PO Box) City State Zip

Student's Phone Number: (_____) _____ Student's Email Address: _____

Parent(s) Name: _____

School: _____

School Address: _____
(Street/PO Box) City State Zip

Name of Teacher Submitting Essay: _____

Teacher's E-mail: _____

Number of Words (not to exceed 1,000): _____ Number of Pages: _____

First Five Words of Essay: _____

"X" this box ☐ you **do not** wish for your essay or name to be released to the public.

Mail the completed cover sheet ATTACHED to your essay to:

Judge J. Mark Hayes, II
Spartanburg County Courthouse
180 Magnolia Street
Spartanburg, SC 29306
Office: (864) 562-4144 Fax: (864) 562-4142

Essay Title: _____ **Entry #:** _____

Academic/Extracurricular Activities

ESSAY THEME:

The Constitution's Promise: Out of Many, One

Please list any of the student's honors, awards, or extracurricular activities that can be used when publishing the student's essay:

Please list the student's academic and vocational goals after graduation (i.e. colleges, military, law enforcement, doctor, lawyer, etc.):
