

OAK

Organizations Associating for the Kind of Change America Really Needs
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Overview of OAK's Joint Submission for the Universal Periodic Review of America's Human Rights Record

- The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) will address, among other things, the “(a)ministration of justice and the rule of law” in America;
- Our basic premise is that the Rule of Law can't be accomplished without meaningful citizen oversight;
- OAK's submission at least begins to establish a lack of meaningful citizen oversight in America:
 - *Disciplinary processes can be easily manipulated to punish legal professionals who are government critics and / or represent controversial clients. **Paradox:** lawyers are the first line of defense for the rights of vulnerable people;*
 - *The DOJ does not adequately redress criminal violations of free speech, freedom of association and assembly, and the right to petition government;*
 - *Major media is not an adequate check on government waste, fraud, and abuse;*
 - *Even with major media exposure, too many private citizens must exhaust their financial resources and emotional fortitude through years (sometimes decades) of advocacy to redress government waste, fraud, and abuse in America;*
 - *We do so with an unspoken but apparent threat of government retaliation; and*
 - *The access to public officials of average Americans, pales in comparison to that of the country's elite.*
- Without meaningful citizen oversight, what would otherwise be our constitutional and human rights are no more than privileges, doled out at government discretion –
 - A state less obvious when the government is generally fair and magnanimous;
 - And most apparent in the government's treatment of anti-corruption advocates / government whistleblowers;
- So OAK's submission makes a case that America's administration of justice is not firmly anchored by the rule of law.

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