Mission Statement

These are times of great peril, and great urgency. Our democratic institutions are under assault; mistrust, division, deception, greed, and inequality are rampant; the land and the very sky are burning and the waters that sustain all life are drying up in some places and flooding in others.

As lawyers, we have a special responsibility to seek and uphold justice, and especially to make sure that all have their say in those matters that affect them. We are called to lift up the voices of the poor, the marginalized, and the disenfranchised among us; we must also, at times, speak for non-human animals and for other parts of the natural world that cannot speak for themselves.

We also have a special responsibility to preserve and expand the rights of all people to fully participate – politically, economically, and socially – in our shared society.

It has never been more necessary for lawyers to actively engage in the work of restoring and protecting both our climate and our democracy. As lawyers in the third act of our lives, we seek to meet this call with determination, ingenuity and wisdom – and also with humility, optimism, and a sense of camaraderie and even joy.

The goals of the Th!rd Act Lawyers Working Group include:

- Supporting and helping to implement Th!rd Act’s national campaigns, and offering our input in shaping those campaigns, where that input might have value;

- Supporting and encouraging Th!rd Act’s cooperation and participation with existing legal organizations that promote climate health and/or access to democracy;

- Identifying, recommending and providing resources that offer legal perspectives on issues concerning climate and democracy, including written materials, web-based resources, and a speakers’ bureau;
● Offering online panel discussions, webinars, and similar events, for both specialized and general audiences, with legal thinkers and leaders in climate and democracy action;

● Monitoring proposed federal legislation on climate and on voting rights, and providing both public comment and internal position statements;

● Encouraging our members to volunteer (through existing organizations) as poll watchers or to staff voter-protection hotlines;

● Issuing “white papers” and drafting model legislation;

● Filing amicus briefs when warranted and possible;

● And always, approaching and encountering all – especially those who rely in some way on fossil fuels to earn their living – with respect and understanding, meeting them where they are, without blame or shame for past or present habits or beliefs.

The Th!rd Act Lawyers Working Group explicitly is not nor do we purport to be legal counsel for Th!rd Act or for any Working Group. But to the extent possible, we aspire to be a general legal resource for other Working Groups, for Th!rd Act as a whole, and for other allies.

We recognize that other individuals and groups are already doing this work, and we intend not to duplicate but to build on and reinforce their efforts in a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect.

**We welcome the active participation of like-minded lawyers (and legal paraprofessionals) in these efforts. The challenges are great – and the time is now.**