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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Madison WI

PRESS STATEMENT FROM ATTORNEYS FOR ALEC COOK

As a nation and society, we believe that each and every one of us is presumed innocent until proven guilty. This principle belongs to each one of us. This is our bedrock. We despise public lynchings and we oppose vigilante justice. Historically, those sorts of injustices happened when angry mobs took to the streets.

The internet has replaced the streets. As a result, for the past few days, we have seen how the rapid-fire internet news cycle erodes that presumption of innocence. This is exactly what is happening to Alec Cook right now. Alec, a 20 year old business major with no criminal history, has seemingly been charged, tried, and convicted. The rapid-fire news cycle, combined with the viral nature of social media, has resulted in a modern-day character assassination that is very real and very wrong.

Perhaps the most troubling aspect of this propagandizing is that people commit this sort of character assassination under the nobler (and politically correct) guise of supporting and believing accusers – even before they know if they are actual victims. But blind acceptance of mere accusations – without hearing testimony or seeing physical evidence – leads to the stigmatization of innocent people. The entire nation saw this happen in the Duke Lacrosse case and in the fabricated rape story from UVA that was reported by The Rolling Stone.

When we embrace this politically correct blind acceptance, we do not help women. We do not combat “rape culture”. We do not send any message to “fraternity row”. We also ignore our bedrock principles while we disempower young women, by stereotyping them into “victimhood” without evidence.

We urge you to wait for the facts before condemning Alec Cook. You would do the same for your own.

- Christopher T. Van Wagner and Jessa Nicholson, Attorneys for Alec Cook