



Federal Bar Association

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FBA URGES CREATION OF NAZI-LOOTED ART COMMISSION

The Federal Bar Association (FBA) has called for Congressional establishment of a commission to address identification and ownership issues related to artworks unlawfully taken during the Nazi regime but remain unreturned to their rightful owners. The call for Congressional creation of a commission on Nazi-looted art occurred during the FBA Board of Directors' recent adoption of its 2013-14 Issues Agenda.

Efforts by rightful claimants to use the American courts to secure their artwork unlawfully taken by the Nazis over 70 years ago have been time-consuming, expensive and largely unfruitful. In comparison, several European nations have established neutral commissions, or tribunals, to systematically and impartially facilitate the resolution of claims by putative owners of Nazi-taken art.

The creation of a federal commission to facilitate the return of Nazi-looted art to their rightful owners would comport with the Washington Conference Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art, as embraced by the United States and more than 40 other nations in 1998. "The Federal Bar Association believes that an American commission, composed of museum representatives, claimant representatives, art historians and prominent experts, would advance the rightful return of these artworks to their owners and descendants," FBA Executive Director Karen Silberman said.

The Federal Bar Association is the largest national association of lawyers and judges who practice and serve within the nation's federal courts. Founded in 1920, the Association is dedicated to the advancement of federal jurisprudence and to promoting the welfare, interests, education, and professional development of all attorneys involved in federal law. Its members run the gamut of federal practice: attorneys practicing in small to large legal firms, attorneys in corporations and federal agencies, and members of the judiciary. The FBA is the catalyst for communication between the bar and the bench, as well as the private and public sectors.