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20 February 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

The news media are neither your enemy, nor the enemy of the American people. In fact, history has demonstrated that we are just the opposite.

In the nearly 300 years since the trial of John Peter Zenger set the precedent for a free and open press, journalists have stared down jail time, and in some cases, given their lives, while fulfilling their duty to inform the public.

We understand that you will not always agree with what is written or spoken about you. But, the fact that you disagree with a story does not make it fake news. And, it does not make the press the enemy.

"The only security of all is in a free press. The force of public opinion cannot be resisted when permitted freely to be expressed. The agitation it produces must be submitted to. It is necessary, to keep the waters pure." - Thomas Jefferson, 1823

Mr. President, everyone who has held your position has, at times, had a contentious relationship with the free press. But, we are not the enemy. We are journalists doing our jobs. Every day we come to work, we are doing as you do, working for the American people.

Sincerely,

Steve Scott, President
The New York Press Club