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## Office of the President

January 14, 2021

The Honorable Roy A. Cooper, III  
Governor of the State of North Carolina  
20301 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

Secretary Mandy K. Cohen, MD  
North Carolina Dept. of Health and Human Services  
2001 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-2000

Re: COVID-19 Vaccination Plan for Judicial Branch

Dear Governor Cooper and Secretary Cohen:

On behalf of the officers of the North Carolina State Bar, we appreciate your tireless efforts to safely, effectively, and equitably implement a COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan. We understand the difficulty you face in balancing the needs of so many with a limited supply of vaccines, and are thankful that healthcare workers and the most vulnerable among us are already receiving COVID-19 vaccines.

We are also grateful that, since the beginning of this pandemic, you recognized the essential nature of the services provided within the judicial branch and allowed judges, lawyers, and courthouse staff to continue administering justice to North Carolina citizens as constitutionally mandated.

Our courthouses constitute the infrastructure of our judicial system. Thankfully, courthouses have largely remained open throughout this pandemic due to the heroic efforts not only of local courthouse personnel, but also of private lawyers who, on a daily basis, must appear in court. These lawyers continue to provide legal services at great personal risk to their health and the health of their families.

As you consider the prioritization of vaccinations for those critical frontline workers who are not able to properly social distance in their daily work, we encourage you to be mindful of the significant number of persons who are not employed by state government and are essential to keeping the criminal, civil, and family courts functioning properly.

We recognize that these types of decisions are very nuanced and would be glad to provide any additional information, resources or support you might find helpful. Once again, thank you for all you are doing to protect our citizens.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Barbara R. Christy".

Barbara R. Christy  
President, North Carolina State Bar