# SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS CONTINUING TO ENSURE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL: CHALLENGES, INNOVATIONS AND VISION FOR THE FUTURE

For Consideration by the Judicial Nomination Commission in its Decision to Re-Designate the Chief Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals

> Submitted by Anna Blackburne-Rigsby Chief Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals

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# APPENDIX B

List of Committee Assignments

#### District of Columbia Court of Appeals Committee Assignments Honorable Anna Blackburne-Rigsby

#### <u>2020</u>

- Chair, Joint Committee on Judicial Administration for the DC Courts
- Chair, Board of Judges, DC Court of Appeals
- Co-Chair, Conference of Chief Justices Pandemic Rapid Response Team Workgroup
- Chair, Conference of Chief Justices Public Engagement, Trust and Confidence Committee
- Conference of Chief Justices Government Affairs Committee
- Chair, Executive Committee of the District of Columbia Pretrial Services Agency
- Board Member, National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts
- Chair, National Association of Women Judges Strategic Planning Committee

#### 2019

- Chair, Joint Committee on Judicial Administration for the DC Courts
- Chair, Board of Judges, DC Court of Appeals
- Board of Directors, Conference of Chief Justices
- Chair, Conference of Chief Justices Public Engagement, Trust and Confidence Committee
- Conference of Chief Justices Government Affairs Committee
- Chair, Executive Committee of the District of Columbia Pretrial Services Agency
- Board Member, National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts
- Chair, National Association of Women Judges Strategic Planning

#### <u>2018</u>

- Chair, Joint Committee on Judicial Administration for the DC Courts
- Chair, Board of Judges, DC Court of Appeals
- Board of Directors, Conference of Chief Justices
- Chair, Conference of Chief Justices Public Engagement, Trust and Confidence Committee
- Conference of Chief Justices Government Affairs Committee
- Chair, Executive Committee of the District of Columbia Pretrial Services Agency
- Board Member, National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts
- Chair, National Association of Women Judges Strategic Planning Committee

#### 2017

- Chair, Joint Committee on Judicial Administration for the DC Courts
- Chair, Board of Judges, DC Court of Appeals
- Chair, Conference of Chief Justices Public Engagement, Trust and Confidence Committee
- Conference of Chief Justices Government Affairs Committee
- Chair, Executive Committee of the District of Columbia Pretrial Services Agency
- Board Member, National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts
- Chair, National Association of Women Judges Strategic Planning Committee

#### 2016

- Chair, Standing Committee on Fairness and Access to the District of Columbia Courts
- District of Columbia Access to Justice Commission
- Committee for the Selection of Deputy Clerk of the Court, District of Columbia Court of Appeals

#### 2015

- Chair, Standing Committee on Fairness and Access to the District of Columbia Courts
- District of Columbia Access to Justice Commission

#### **2014**

- Chair, Standing Committee on Fairness and Access to the District of Columbia Courts
- District of Columbia Access to Justice Commission

#### <u>2013</u>

- Chair, Standing Committee on Fairness and Access to the District of Columbia Courts
- District of Columbia Access to Justice Commission
- Criminal Justice Act Committee

#### <u>2012</u>

- Chair, Standing Committee on Fairness and Access to the District of Columbia Courts
- District of Columbia Access to Justice Commission
- Client's Security Trust Fund
- Criminal Justice Act Committee
- Library Committee

#### **2011**

- Standing Committee on Fairness and Access to the District of Columbia Courts
- District of Columbia Access to Justice Commission
- Client's Security Trust Fund
- Committee for the Selection of Deputy Clerk of the Court, District of Columbia Court of Appeals
- Criminal Justice Act Committee
- Library Committee

#### 2010

- Standing Committee on Fairness and Access to the District of Columbia Courts
- Client's Security Trust Fund
- Criminal Justice Act Committee
- Library Committee

#### <u>2009</u>

- Standing Committee on Fairness and Access to the District of Columbia Courts
- Client's Security Trust Fund
- Criminal Justice Act Committee
- Judicial Conference
- Library Committee

#### **2008**

- Standing Committee on Fairness and Access to the District of Columbia Courts
- Client's Security Trust Fund
- Criminal Justice Act Committee
- Judicial Conference
- Library Committee

#### 2007

- Standing Committee on Fairness and Access to the District of Columbia Courts
- Client's Security Trust Fund
- Criminal Justice Act Committee
- Library Committee

#### 2006

- Standing Committee on Fairness and Access to the District of Columbia Courts
- Client's Security Trust Fund
- Criminal Justice Act Committee
- Library Committee

#### Superior Court of the District of Columbia Committee Assignments Honorable Anna Blackburne-Rigsby

#### **2006**

- Judicial Education Committee
- Committee on the Selection and Tenure of Magistrate Judges
- Counsel for Child Abuse and Neglect Panels Committee
- Courts Security Committee

# APPENDIX C

Honorable Anna Blackburne-Rigsby Biography

# Biography Chief Judge Anna Blackburne-Rigsby Chief Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals

The Honorable Anna Blackburne-Rigsby was appointed Chief Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals in March 2017. Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby chairs the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration for the District of Columbia court system. She is a member of the Conference of Chief Justices, and chairs the Committee on Public Engagement Trust and Confidence. Chief Judge Anna Blackburne-Rigsby also served as a member of the Conference's Board of Directors from 2018-2020.

Prior to being designated Chief Judge, Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby was nominated by President George W. Bush in August 2006 to serve as an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. Before that, she was nominated by President William Jefferson Clinton to serve as an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia from 2000-2006, and she previously served as a Magistrate Judge on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia from 1995-2000.

Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby graduated from Duke University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science, and received the Duke University Presidential Leadership Award. Following graduation from Duke University, she was selected to be one of twelve Public Affairs Fellows of the Coro Foundation in San Francisco, California. She earned her law degree from Howard University School of Law, graduating in the top five percent of her class. While in law school, she served as the Lead Articles Editor of the Howard Law Journal and served as the Co-Captain for the Charles Hamilton Houston Moot Court Team.

Following law school, Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby was an associate at the law firm of Hogan Lovells US LLP (formerly Hogan and Hartson) in Washington, D.C., where she litigated commercial, real estate, employment discrimination, and education matters before state and federal courts and administrative agencies. Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby later joined the District of Columbia Office of the Corporation Counsel (now District of Columbia Office of the Attorney General), where she served as Special Counsel to the Corporation Counsel, working as part of the senior management team. She then served as Deputy Corporation Counsel in charge of the Family Services Division, where she managed the Division's 65 attorneys and support staff, responsible for handling child abuse and neglect, child support enforcement, and domestic violence cases.

Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby has taught Trial Advocacy at the Harvard Law School and Professional Responsibility as an Adjunct Professor at the David A. Clarke School of Law at the University of the District of Columbia. She has also taught Continuing Legal Education courses for the District of Columbia Bar. Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby has trained judges from other countries in conjunction with the National Center for State Courts and the United States Department of State.

Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby has held offices in several judicial organizations. As an Associate Judge of the D.C. Court of Appeals, she chaired the District of Columbia Courts' Standing Committee on Fairness and Access, and she served on the District of Columbia's Access to Justice Commission. Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby serves on the Board of Directors for the National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts and also formerly served as the Consortium's President and Moderator. She is a former Chair of the Washington Bar Association's Judicial Council. The Washington Bar Association is an affiliate of the National Bar Association. Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby is a Past President of the National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ). In addition to her work with the National Association of Women Judges, she also serves on the Board of Managerial Trustees for the International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ) and served as Chair from 2010-2014. In March of 2006, Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby represented the IAWJ at a Judicial Conference in Turin, Italy, where she delivered a speech on Racial Equality in the Workplace at the Lavoro dei Migranti e Discriminazione Convegno. In 2003, she traveled to Johannesburg, South Africa to participate in a conference of the African Judicial Network. In 2014, Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby led the delegation of women judges from the United States at the Biennial Conference of the International Association of Women Judges. In 2017, Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby presented a paper at the Summit of Women Judges and Prosecutors on Human Trafficking and Organized Crime hosted by the Pontifical Academies of Sciences and Social Sciences at the Vatican. Through her work with these organizations, Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby has sought to promote the rule of law and equal access to justice.

Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby has volunteered on the D.C. Rape Crisis Board; she is the former President of the Washington, D.C. Chapter of Jack and Jill of America, Inc.; a member of the Washington, D.C. Chapter of the Links, Inc.; and a lifelong member of the NAACP. She served as a Sunday school teacher at Shiloh Baptist Church and coached the girls' basketball team of St. Gabriel's Church.

Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby has received awards for her legal, judicial and community service, including the Business and Professional Women's League's "Sojourner Truth Award", the Women's Bar Association of the District of Columbia's "2014 Star of the Bar Award", the National Bar Association's "Heman Sweatt Champion of Justice" Award, the Greater Washington Area Women Lawyers Division's (GWAC) "Charlotte E. Ray Award", and the National Association of Women Judges' "Justice Vaino Spencer Leadership Award." In 2017, she was inducted into the Washington Bar Association Hall of Fame. In 2017 and 2019, she was honored as one of Washington, D.C.'s Most Powerful Women by the Washingtonian magazine. Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby was named "2018 Woman Lawyer of the Year" by the Women's Bar Association of the District of Columbia. Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby has been named the Washington Bar Association's 2020 Charles Hamilton Houston Medallion of Merit recipient. She was awarded the American Bar Association's Margaret Brent Award Honoring Women in the Legal Profession in August 2020 and the National Association of Women Judges "Lady Justice Award" in October 2020.

Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby was born in the District of Columbia. She is married to Judge Robert R. Rigsby, Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, former Corporation Counsel for the District of Columbia, Retired Military Judge, and Retired Colonel of the United States Army. They are the proud parents of one son, a recent college graduate.

# APPENDIX D

Honorable Anna Blackburne-Rigsby Awards

#### Chief Judge Anna Blackburne-Rigsby Awards May 2017 – November 2020

#### 2017

Received the National Association of Women Judges, District Four, Edna Parker Award. Supreme Court Justice Sotomayor was in attendance, along with judges from DC Court of Appeals and DC Superior Court.

Honored as one of Washington's Most Powerful Women by the Washingtonian Magazine.

Inducted into the Washington Bar Association Hall of Fame.

Received the Raymond Pace Alexander Award from the National Bar Association's Judicial Council.

#### 2018

Received the Women's Bar Association Woman Lawyer of the Year Award.

#### **2019**

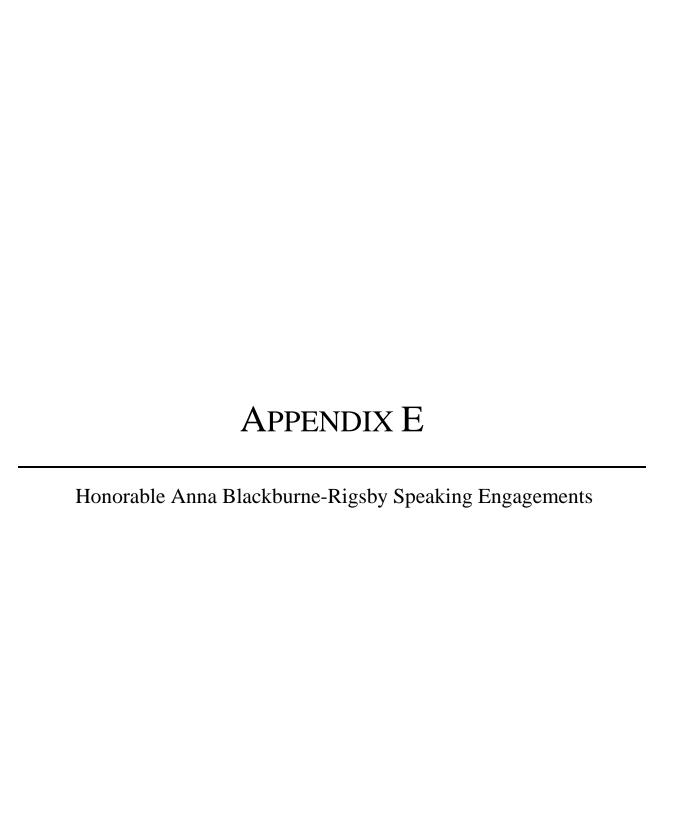
Honored as one of Washington's Most Powerful Women by the Washingtonian Magazine.

#### <u>2020</u>

Received the Washington Bar Association Charles Hamilton Houston Medallion of Merit.

Received the American Bar Association Margaret Brent Award Honoring Women in the Legal Profession.

Received the National Association of Women Judges Lady Justice Award.



#### Chief Judge Anna Blackburne-Rigsby Webinars, Speaking Engagements, Panels May 2017 – November 2020

- May 2, 2017 Hosted the Law Day Live-Streamed Q&A in the DC Court of Appeals Ceremonial Courtroom with Chief Judge Morin, DC Bar President Annamaria Steward, and ABA President Linda Klein.
- **June 15, 2017** "Conversation with the Chief Judges" panel discussion with Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby, and Chief Judge Morin at the Council for Court Excellence's board meeting.
- **June 27, 2017** Panel Discussion hosted Bryan Cave LLP panel discussion for attorneys with Eric Angel of the Legal Aid Society, "Critical Conversations: The Rule of Law and the Role of the Legal Community".
- **July 31- August 1, 2017** Attended the National Bar Association's Annual Meeting.
- **December 5, 2017** Participated with Judge Washington and Judge Ferren on an Alumni Panel discussion at Hogan Lovells LLP, discussing our careers and on DC Court of Appeals.
- **January 17, 2018** Speaker at the monthly luncheon of the Counsellors, a group of judges and lawyers in the city. Retired DC Court of Appeals Judge Belson is a member.
- **April 4-6, 2018** Attended the Conference of Chief Justices New England/Mid-Atlantic Civil Justice Reform Summit and moderated a panel on the importance of communicating with a broad array of stakeholders in discussing civil justice reform.
- May 26, 2018 Delivered Graduation Speech at San Jose State University to the students in the Educational Opportunity Program.
- October 29, 2018 Guest speaker at WilmerHale's Professional Speaker Series event. "The Importance of a Diverse Judiciary and Diverse Legal Profession".
- **November 29, 2018** Panelist on the Washington Bar Association Judicial Council "Views from the Bench" program, with Judge Thompson.
- **December 5, 2018** Panelist, "Civility in the Courts" hosted at GW Law School.

March 20, 2019 – Panelist, "Diversity and Inclusion in the Legal Profession", Government Accounting Office, General Counsel Office Attorneys with Veta Richardson as co-panelist.

March 22, 2019 - Womble Bond Dickinson Business Litigation Conference Talk; "Conversation with the Chief".

May 17, 2019 - Commencement speech at the University of the District of Columbia Law School's graduation.

**November 15, 2019** - Panel member at National Appellate Judges Education Institute Summit: *An Independent Judiciary: The Shield of a Free Society* 

**January 20 and 21, 2020** - Delivered the keynote speech at Vermont Law School for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. I met with Justices on the Vermont Supreme Court, as well as members of the Vermont Judiciary and Legislature.

**April 29, 2020** - Taped a podcast for Law Day "Your Vote, Your Voice, Our Democracy: The 19th Amendment at 100".

June 5, 2020 – Issued a video statement titled "Ensuring Equal Access to Justice for All", in the aftermath of the tragic death of George Floyd and protests.

June 16, 2020 - Participated in a webinar sponsored by The National Black Lawyers Top 100: "Addressing Critical Challenges to Access to Justice: A Conversation with Chief Judge Anna Blackburne-Rigsby".

**June 7, 2020** - Keynote speaker for kick off of the Washington Council of Lawyers Summer Pro Bono & Public Interest Forum, focusing on the courts response to the COVID-19 pandemic with Jim Sandman, President Emeritus of the Legal Services Corporation, and Chair of the American Bar Association's COVID-19 Task Force.

**July 7, 2020** - Served as a panelist for the Washington Council of Lawyers Summer Pro Bono and Public Interest Forum.

July 29, 2020 - Planned and moderated "A Call to Action for State Court Leaders: Towards a Blueprint for Sustainable Reform and Equal Justice", for the Conference of Chief Justices Annual Meeting.

**August 31, 2020** - Served as a panelist for a National Judicial College webinar titled: "A Conversation with Chief Justices about Racial Fairness."

**September 16, 2020** - Served as moderator for National Association of Women Judges Legislative-Judicial Caucus: "Families in Crisis: The Impact of the Pandemic on Families in the Wake of COVID-19".

**October 4, 2020** - Panelist for the Links, Inc. Art Facets Panel Discussion and Screening of the Documentary about Congressman John Lewis "Good Trouble".

October 7, 2020 - Presented remarks at the Washington Bar Association Ollie Mae Cooper Award Ceremony and Founders' Lecture.

October 21, 2020 - Moderated a panel for the DC Bar 2020 Virtual Conference on "The Current State of Voting Rights".

**November 5, 2020** - Served as a panelist for the National Center for State Courts: "A Conversation with Chief Justices".

**November 12, 2020** – Served on a panel for GWAC/National Bar Association: "A Conversation with the Judiciary: Re-Imaging Local and Federal Courts".



Ensuring Equal Access to Justice Video Statement

#### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURT OF APPEALS



430 E STREET, N.W. WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001

CHAMBERS OF ANNA BLACKBURNE-RIGSBY Chief Judge

(202) 879-2730

June 11, 2020

# ENSURING EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL (Text from video recording)

Hello. My name is Anna Blackburne-Rigsby. I am the Chief Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals and I have served as a judge for nearly twenty-five years. I proudly represent the District of Columbia local court system.

The tragic death of George Floyd, an African-American man, has sparked protests around our country and around the world.

The protesters who are peacefully exercising their Constitutional right to protest, are crying out against racism and inequality. Those values are antithetical to all that our United States democracy represents. And they are inconsistent with the ideal of "Equal Justice Under Law", which the words over the entrance to the United States Supreme promise us.

The racism and inequalities which the protesters are speaking out against, are rooted in the unfortunate history of legalized discrimination in our country. Starting with slavery, and including laws that legalized segregation based on race, and laws that denied African-Americans and women the right to vote. In fact, as I sit here in the Historic Courthouse, I am often reminded that upon the enactment of the District of Columbia Emancipation Act in 1862, which freed enslaved persons in DC, a commission met right here in our historic courthouse to determine how much money slave owners should be paid for their newly freed slaves.

Our courts have always played an important role throughout history in overturning discriminatory and unjust laws and ensuring equal access to justice for all. And our courts—the judicial branch of our government—still continue to play an important role in protecting the rights of all people and ensuring access to justice for all.

As judges, we take an oath to do justice equally to the rich and to the poor, and to all people without regard to race, gender, religion, or sexual orientation, and to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. We hold sacred the rights guaranteed by the Constitution, and we work hard to ensure that these rights apply equally to all. As judges, it is important to listen to and fairly resolve the cases in our courts, which involve people from all walks of life.

Our judges and dedicated court staff take very seriously the important role of administering justice. We continue to work hard to ensure access to justice for all, and to make our courts the best they can be to serve our community. Our courts' motto is "Open to all, trusted by all, justice for all". I am proud of the many innovative programs our courts have developed to help people with cases in our courts.

However, as judges, and court staff, we must constantly assess and evaluate our court processes, rules and procedures to ensure that they are fair and ensure access to justice for all. We must re-double our efforts to ensure fairness and to promote public trust and confidence in our judiciary.

As the Chief Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, I pledge that we will continue to work hard to ensure that our DC Courts provide equal access to justice for all who come before the courts. For carved on the plaza of our courthouse are the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "Injustice anywhere, is a threat to justice everywhere . . . ."

Justice is the cornerstone of our democracy and our courts must ensure equal rights and justice for all.

Sincerely,

Anna Blackburne-Rigsby

a, Blackburn-Rysh

Chief Judge

### APPENDIX G

Conference of Chief Justices
Resolution 1
In Support of Racial Equality and Justice for All

# CONFERENCE OF CHIEF JUSTICES CONFERENCE OF STATE COURT ADMINISTRATORS

#### **Resolution 1**

#### In Support of Racial Equality and Justice for All

- WHEREAS, in the 70 years since the founding of the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) and the 65 years since the founding of the Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA), CCJ and COSCA have stood for the principle that every human being is deserving of respect and is entitled to equal justice under the law; and
- WHEREAS, current events have underscored the persistence in our society of institutional and structural racism resulting in policies and practices that disproportionately impact persons of color; and
- WHEREAS, CCJ and COSCA recognize that too many persons, especially persons of color, lack confidence in the fairness of courts and the criminal justice system; and
- WHEREAS, courts in many states, with the encouragement, support, and guidance of CCJ and COSCA, have initiated efforts:
  - to identify and address unconscious bias, and facilitate the uncomfortable conversations that arise from the recognition of such bias<sup>1</sup>;
  - to diminish the extent to which pretrial release depends on a defendant's ability to pay<sup>2</sup>;
  - to develop evidence-based practices in sentencing and throughout the criminal justice process<sup>3</sup>;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See generally National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts (NCREF), <u>Implicit Bias Training and Materials</u> at <a href="http://www.national-consortium.org/implicit-bias">http://www.national-consortium.org/implicit-bias</a>; See also, e.g., Minnesota Judicial Branch, Committee for Equality and Justice, <u>Implicit Bias Benchcard</u>, <a href="https://www.ncsc.org/">https://www.ncsc.org/</a> data/assets/pdf file/0024/17637/implicit-bias-bench-card.pdf.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See generally CCJ/COSCA's National Task Force on Fines, Fees, and Bail Practices <u>Principles on Fines, Fees, and Bail Practices, https://www.ncsc.org/data/assets/pdf\_file/0020/14195/principles-1-17-19.pdf</u>; See also Cities and Counties for Fine and Fee Justice, Roadmap to Bold and Equitable Fine and Fee Reform, May 2020 <a href="https://www.policylink.org/sites/default/files/ccffj\_guide\_060420\_a\_BRIEF.pdf">https://www.policylink.org/sites/default/files/ccffj\_guide\_060420\_a\_BRIEF.pdf</a>; accord Fines and Fees Justice Center at Examples of County and City-Level Fines and Fees Reforms,

 $<sup>\</sup>underline{https://finesandfeesjusticecenter.org/campaigns/counties-and-cities-for-fine-and-fee-justice.}$ 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See, e.g. Massachusetts Court System, <u>Sentencing Best Practices</u>, <u>https://www.mass.gov/info-details/sentencingbest-practices</u>.

- to establish proportionate sanctions for the failure to pay fines and fees for those who willfully fail to pay, and to prevent sanctions from being imposed on those who are financially unable to pay<sup>4</sup>; SDF
- to collect, maintain and report court data regarding race and ethnicity that enables courts to identify and remedy racial disparities<sup>5</sup>;
- to develop career pathways to improve the racial and ethnic diversity of the bench, law clerks, and court staff, as well as the legal community<sup>6</sup>; and
- to engage in conversations with communities of color, so that, in the words of Bryan Stevenson, our courts "get proximate" to the challenges faced by such communities;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators do hereby agree to continue and to intensify efforts to combat racial prejudice within the justice system, both explicit and implicit, and to recommit to examine what systemic change is needed to make equality under the law an enduring reality for all, so that justice is not only fair to all but also is recognized by all to be fair.

Proposed by the CCJ/COSCA Access and Fairness Committee and the CCJ/COSCA Public Engagement, Trust, and Confidence Committee at the CCJ/COSCA Annual Meeting on July 30, 2020.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> See supra resources accompanying note 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> See generally National Open Court Data Standards (NODS), <u>User Guide</u>, <u>https://www.ncsc.org/data/assets/pdf\_file/0014/34025/NODS-User-Guide.pdf</u>, (NODS website: Access to Standards)("Self-identification is preferred for race, ethnicity, and gender. In some jurisdictions, a proxy for self-identified race and gender may be based upon the perception of the criminal justice officer or court official who had the first contact with the individual. Because of the sensitivity of the information, gender may not be collected or, if it is collected, may not be released. Many jurisdictions collect race information in greater detail, but they can be mapped to the race values in NODS.")

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> See generally National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ), <a href="https://www.nawj.org">https://www.nawj.org</a> and NAWJ's "Color of Justice" program; See also Yuvraj Joshi and Liz Seaton, <a href="Diversity Counts: Why states should measure the diversity of their judges and how they can do it">https://www.lambdalegal.org/sites/default/files/legal-docs/downloads/20170607</a> diversity-counts.pdf.