

**MIDDLESEX COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION RESOLUTION
ACKNOWLEDGING COMMITMENT TO
THE RIGHT TO A MEANINGFUL TRIAL**

WHEREAS the right to a fair and meaningful trial is at the core of our national and state judicial systems and is a fundamental and necessary requirement to ensure a meaningful process for dispute resolution; and

WHEREAS the right to a trial by jury in certain civil and criminal matters is a fundamental right that is guaranteed to all Americans through our Federal and State Constitutions; and

WHEREAS, in the interest of disposing of more cases, and promoting “speedy trials,” the New Jersey judiciary has proposed reductions in the number of peremptory challenges afforded in jury trials, and has done so without sufficient and appropriate regard to its impact on the process and such is in conflict with New Jersey statutes prescribing the number of challenges and conditions under which they may be used to insure the public’s right to a meaningful trial;

WHEREAS, other proposals to dispose of more cases more quickly have included restricting pretrial discovery and limiting opening and closing statements at trial, all in derogation of the public’s right to a fair and meaningful trial; and

WHEREAS, the emphasis of the Administrative Office of the Courts on statistics continues to impair the quality of justice in the New Jersey courts, and

WHEREAS, both civil and criminal cases in this State are often moved to resolution and expedited over the objection of counsel, when a more appropriate solution to the issue of moving cases is for the Governor and Legislature to nominate and approve the appropriate number of judges required to administer justice in the State of New Jersey, and compensate those judges fairly and equitably, and

WHEREAS, the Middlesex County Bar Association is dedicated to the promotion of the public’s access to justice, and recognizes that ultimately the right to a fair and objective jury panel is the benchmark of a fair judicial system and that fair jury selection provides to the public a fair judicial process; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Middlesex County Bar Association, that there be no reduction in the number of peremptory challenges simply for the purposes of speeding up trials through shortened jury selection, as the Middlesex County Bar Association believes that justice should never be sacrificed for the sake of statistics by the New Jersey judiciary as afforded by state statute in certain civil and criminal matters (excepting multi-defendant criminal cases), nor any restriction on pretrial discovery, nor any limitation on opening and closing statements at trial, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded forthwith to the Governor, the Chief Justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court, each county bar association, the New Jersey State Bar Association, the New Jersey Association for Justice and the Trial Attorneys of New Jersey.

Craig M. Aronow

Craig M. Aronow, President

Dated: November 25, 2015