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November 17, 2020

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu  
State House  
107 North Main Street  
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Governor Sununu:

Please accept this letter as the Judicial Council's monthly report on the progress of the directives required pursuant to Executive Order 2020-19. The Executive Director of the Judicial Council was instructed to require implicit bias and racial profiling training for all New Hampshire public defenders.

On September 10, 2020, the New Hampshire Public Defender held a mandatory training on implicit bias. The training was provided by Soudie Tahmassebpour. Ms. Tahmassebpour has a unique vantage point as she began her legal career in 1999 as a New Hampshire Public Defender. She was both a staff attorney and a managing attorney in the Nashua and Manchester offices. In 2012, she continued her career as a Public Defender with the Committee for Public Counsel Services. Ms. Tahmassebpour is an Iranian-born attorney who recently joined Boston College Law School as their Diversity and Inclusion Consultant, where she has helped develop goals and execute strategies to realize an inclusive environment. All Public Defender attorneys were required to participate in this training.

In addition to this training, the New Hampshire Public Defender will continue to address diversity and inclusion issues through facilitated staff discussions. Ms. Tahmassebpour trained a group of volunteer facilitators on September 18, 2020 and October 19, 2020. Going forward, the trained facilitators will lead small discussion groups designed to engage all staff on these issues. Various options for racial profiling training are still under consideration.

The Judicial Council has partnered with the Warren B. Rudman Center at UNH Law on a training series focused on critical issues in juvenile and family law cases. An upcoming presentation entitled *Race, Poverty and Juvenile Court: The Cradle to Prison Pipeline* will bring the issues of bias and

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overrepresentation to additional stakeholders in the juvenile and criminal justice arenas. This virtual training is scheduled for November 20, 2020. We are also planning an implicit bias training in early 2021.

This agency will remain at your service to provide any requested information concerning the critical importance of these trainings.

Sincerely,



Sarah T. Blodgett

Executive Director