



## NEW JERSEY STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

DOMENICK CARMAGNOLA, PRESIDENT  
Carmagnola & Ritardi, LLC  
60 Washington Street, Suite 300  
Morristown, NJ 07960-6859  
973-267-4445 • FAX: 973-267-4456  
dcarmagnola@cr-law.net

### Via Regular Mail and Email

February 2, 2022

Honorable Phil Murphy  
Office of the Governor  
P.O. Box 001  
125 W. State Street  
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Governor Murphy:

Judicial vacancies are an endemic issue always simmering in New Jersey and throughout its legal system. Yet too often in recent history – such as in this moment – the number of vacancies has been allowed to grow into a full boil of crisis. I write seeking your personal intervention and attention to this issue which is of paramount importance to New Jersey and its citizens.

The vacancies are now having direct impact on the New Jersey Supreme Court, our state's highest court. With already one vacancy, as a result of Justice Jaynee LaVecchia's recent retirement, there will be a second vacancy in less than two weeks when Justice Faustino J. Fernandez-Vina reaches the mandatory retirement age of 70. The New Jersey Supreme Court is now at the forefront of the vacancy crisis. Even more, it is approaching territory seen only once in modern times – two vacancies on the Court at the same time – with a potential for unprecedented territory if this is not addressed before June when a third vacancy will occur.

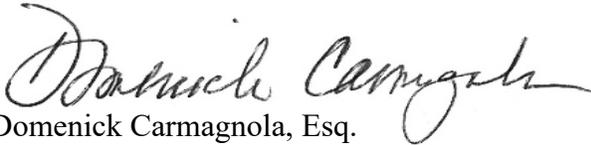
While some view discussions about judicial vacancies to be an esoteric issue, it has very real consequences on the members of the public and business owners who turn to the courts to resolve disputes. With the historic number of vacancies that have been pending for the past several years, there are too few judges serving the bench, resulting in too many people waiting for justice. The need to take action is real and must occur now.

The New Jersey State Bar Association has always been proud of the role it plays in vetting judicial and prosecutorial candidates. We remain committed to doing our part to ensure as many qualified candidates are reviewed in a timely fashion. We urge, in the strongest terms, that you nominate qualified candidates to fill the vacancies on the Supreme Court, as well as the Superior Court, as soon as possible and work diligently with legislators to ensure the successful confirmation of each.

Our courts are regarded as the finest in the nation. Our Judiciary is a strong, independent co-equal branch of government that cannot be allowed to toil without sufficient resources. Most importantly, our Supreme Court must operate at a full complement, and we ask for your immediate commitment, energy and vigilance to address the vacancies there with all due speed and efficiency.

The people and businesses of our great state deserve nothing less.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Domenick Carmagnola". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping tail.

Domenick Carmagnola, Esq.  
President

C. Jeralyn L. Lawrence, Esq., NJSBA President-Elect  
Angela C. Scheck, NJSBA Executive Director