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SUPREME COURT COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN THE COURTS

JUDGE KAREN M. CASSIDY
CHAIR

JUDGE NANCY RIDGWAY
VICE-CHAIR



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June 15, 2018

Glenn A. Grant, J.A.D.
Acting Administrative Director of the Courts
Rules Comments—Oral Argument Rule
Hughes Justice Complex; PO Box 037
Trenton, NJ 08625-0037

Dear Judge Grant:

The Supreme Court Committee on Women in the Courts has considered the proposed change to Court Rule 2:11-1 limiting the number of attorneys who may present oral argument before the Supreme Court and the Appellate Division of Superior Court. We concur with the ACLU that this rule change has the potential to limit opportunities for women and people of color to gain valuable appellate experience.

The topic of women serving as first chairs at trial has received a great deal of attention by our state and national bar associations, as well as being discussed extensively by our committee. In 2017, our committee cosponsored a program on the topic at the NJSBA Annual Conference. Given the increased difficulty all lawyers face in gaining appellate experience, it is reasonable to conclude that this rule change will further reduce those opportunities for these underrepresented groups.

If the Court does decide to adopt this rule change, we request that its impact on the number of women and people of color arguing appeals be examined on an annual basis and that the rule change be reconsidered should it be discovered to have had a negative impact on women and people of color.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Karen M. Cassidy, A.J.S.C.
Committee Chair