



February 6, 2020

To the Residents of Mecklenburg County,

What I learned as a child growing up in rural John's Island, South Carolina is, "Manners will take you where money will not." My mother instilled these values, and it is what has propelled me for nearly 20 years to advocate extensively for children and families in our community. I reaffirm my unwavering dedication to serve.

Let's be transparent. We are only one week away from the start of early voting and tonight's news story was not intended to seek justice, inform or educate the people of Mecklenburg County. Instead, the primary driver was a politically motivated attempt to distort and grossly miseducate the public about my integrity and the inner workings of the court.

Justice starts with reporting the facts. I do not have 52 undecided cases. Although I cannot comment on the specifics of any individual case, I can affirm that I presided over thousands of cases involving sensitive and complex matters. They all evoke strong emotions. My primary responsibility is to hear the facts and thoughtfully determine the most appropriate application of the law. I do so impartially, with no regard to the demographic make-up of litigants, attorneys, or other involved parties.

Justice is administered beyond the walls of the courthouse. I am assigned a one-week rotation each month to preside over hearings at hospital behavioral health centers. This rotation is split among the county's four juvenile court judges. I regularly preside over hearings that involve sensitive juvenile matters on-site at Alexander Youth Network and Thompson Child & Family Focus. This means, I regularly hold court outside of the courthouse and badge swipe records tell an incomplete story.

Justice requires a methodical review of the law. I preside over many cases with complexities that rightly demand an in-depth examination of the applicable laws in order to administer the most appropriate ruling. In these cases, the best interest of children and families must be placed first. Although judges are not permitted to have individual conversations with litigants, I urge the individual who presented the story tonight to contact the Family Court Administrator's Office.

I am honored to have the support of a diverse cross-section of the legal and broader community along with the endorsement of more than 10 judges, including Chief District Court Judge Regan Miller. I humbly ask the residents of Mecklenburg County to examine my unrivaled academic credentials, diverse legal practice experience, and legal and civic leadership experience as you head to the polls for early voting, February 13-29 or on March 3.

Sincerely,

Judge Aretha Blake

For additional details, you may view a [complete copy of the statement](#) issued by the Public Information Trial Court Administrator's Office, Jessica Davis.