

April 1, 2020

Mr. Will Parker, Esq.  
General Counsel  
Office of Governor Kay Ivey  
600 Dexter Avenue  
Montgomery, AL 36130

Dear Mr. Parker:

The Alabama Defense Lawyers Association is dedicated to promote a high standard of ethics and professionalism while working to improve the administration of justice. On behalf of more than 900 members of the ADLA, lawyers who serve primarily as defense lawyers in civil cases, we appreciate the work of Governor Ivey and her staff to craft a response to one of the worst pandemics our country has experienced since the Spanish Influenza epidemic of 1918.

Lawyers, who serve as officers of the civil side of the judicial system, provide an essential service in times of crisis. As officers of the court, we provide professional advocacy for those seeking to resolve differences that, in olden days, were decided without a court system in trials by combat. This is a role recognized as one of the Declaration of Rights in our state's constitution. Indeed, to provide a legal process for resolving private disputes, the Alabama Constitution provides:

“That all courts shall be open, and that every person, for any injury done him in his lands, goods, person, or reputation, shall have a remedy by due process of law; and right and justice shall be administered without sale, denial, or delay.”

CONST. ALA. 1901 § 14.

Members of the ADLA and, for that matter, the members of the Alabama Association for Justice, provide essential guidance for citizens employing their right to seek a remedy, as well as, those who are alleged to have committed a tort, breach of contract or other civil cause of action. Without lawyers, citizens would be unable to obtain due process of law in our civil system in a timely manner.

We are aware that in recent days, public officials across the country have begun the shutdown of “non-essential” businesses for periods of time. Other states have determined that legal professional services are essential. We support the work of Chief Justice Parker and the State Bar to keep our court system open during this crisis while we utilize best practices to avoid transmission of the virus. We would respectfully ask that, in any action by Gov. Ivey’s office to limit commercial activity, the government recognize legal services as essential to public welfare.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.



Christina May Bolin  
ADLA President



Dennis Bailey  
ADLA Immediate Past President

cc:

Chief of Staff Jo Bonner  
Chief Justice Tom Parker  
Alabama State Bar President Christina D. Crow  
Alabama State Bar Executive Director Phillip McCallum  
Alabama Association for Justice President Joshua Hayes