

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF NORTH CAROLINA

December 12, 2016

Dear Governor McCrory,

Thank you for your service as North Carolina's Governor the past four years. The special legislative session you are calling to address the damages of Hurricane Matthew and the recent wildfires in western NC is laudable.

However, news media are reporting that you and the legislature are considering using this opportunity to appoint two additional justices to the NC Supreme Court. The League of Women Voters of NC strongly opposes this action, one that will subvert the will of the people by overriding the November 8, 2016, election outcome and changing the balance of the NC Supreme Court for political purposes.

In the past the Courts have been expanded in response to an increased workload. Today, no such justification exists. According to the most recent NC state appellate court Statistical and Operation Report there has been no significant increase in the Court's workload over the past ten years.

Without an increased workload, the expansion of the Court by appointing unelected justices is telling the people of NC that you and the legislature believe our judiciary cannot and should not be trusted to be impartial and independent and that a Justice's ideology overrules the rule of law. Without faith in our impartial and independent judiciary, our society will no longer be able to function under the rule of law. That will undermine the very foundation of civil society itself, including our democracy.

Throughout our 96-year history, the League of Women Voters has stood for representative government and the right of every citizen to participate in democracy by voting. This depends completely on the integrity of the vote. The people of NC spoke on November 8th; not everyone agrees with the outcome of every race but it is the will of the people in the greatest democracy on earth. Expanding the court with unelected Justices right after an election and so close to the end of the session with no evidence of an increased workload to justify the expansion is a direct assault on the outcome of the election and on the power and integrity of the vote.

The League of Women Voters establishes its principles and public policy positions only after thorough study and consensus. One of our basic principles states that "The League of Women Voters believes that responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people." This is what we ask of you and the legislators. In your final days as Governor we ask you to safeguard the foundation of our democracy by limiting the mandate of the special session to disaster relief. Do not allow the will of NC voters to be overruled.

Yours sincerely,
Willie Taylor and Mary Klenz, Co-Presidents

Cc: Senator Phil Berger, NC Senate Pro Tem
Representative Tim Moore, Speaker, NC House