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October 26, 2020

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Honorable Mary Ellen Barbera, Chief Judge
 c/o Suzanne C. Johnson, Clerk
 Court of Appeals of Maryland
 361 Rowe Blvd.
 Annapolis, MD 21401
COAClerkoftheCourt@mdcourts.gov
Marye.barbera@mdcourts.gov

Honorable John P. Morrissey, Chief Judge
 c/o Roberta L. Warnken
 District Court Headquarters
 Maryland Judicial Center
 187 Harry S Truman Parkway
 Annapolis, MD 21401
roberta.warnken@mdcourts.gov

Honorable Barbara Baer Waxman, Administrative Judge
 Edward F. Borgerding Courthouse
 5800 Wabash Ave.
 Baltimore, MD 21215-3330
Barbara.Waxman@mdcourts.gov

RE: Conditions at the Wabash Courthouse

Dear Chief Judge Barbera, Chief Judge Morrissey, and Administrative Judge Waxman:

There continues to be an ongoing outbreak of COVID-19 at the District Courthouse located at 5800 Wabash Avenue in Baltimore, Maryland. Additionally, there are serious public health and safety concerns that predate this outbreak, which have further exacerbated its potential spread through the building and into the community.

We, the members of Local 423 (the Maryland Defenders Union) and Local 3674 (Maryland Judiciary Employees) therefore issue this joint list of demands, to combat a crisis that continues to threaten our members, our clients, and our families. We are the clerks, attorneys, social workers, and support staff who must continue to risk our lives amidst unsafe conditions.

We demand:

- 1) That the Wabash Avenue building immediately close for a 72 hour period

Every AFSCME Maryland State and University contract guarantees a right to union representation. An employee has the right to a union representative if requested by the employee.
 800.492.1996

Conditions at the Wabash Courthouse

- 2) That, during this closure, the Wabash Avenue building be completely and thoroughly cleaned and disinfected
- 3) That workers be allowed to open windows (to increase airflow and protect their own health and safety) without risk of reprimand or retaliation
- 4) That the Administrative Judge modify dockets so that all non-criminal matters be held remotely. Only criminal matters for incarcerated litigants should be docketed for in-person hearings, with all remaining matters postponed until the safety issues at the courthouse are resolved.
- 5) That the courthouse immediately install adequate Plexiglas dividers between workers, and between workers and the public
- 6) That the judiciary immediately communicate the existence and location of any and all COVID-19 positive courthouse entrants to all courthouse workers
- 7) That the courthouse return to alternating shifts for clerks and staff
- 8) That all workers be provided with adequate PPE
- 9) That public entry into the clerk's office be more strictly limited
- 10) That the court take immediate action to develop reasonable enforcement alternatives for both entry-point screening questionnaires and mask mandates, as courthouse security has continually failed to follow and enforce these basic rules

We thank you for your time and attention to these critical public health issues and anticipate your prompt response. We are available to meet with you at any time to discuss these issues, at your convenience. Please contact us via AFSCME MD Field Director, Denise Gilmore at dgilmore@afscmemd.org.

Sincerely,

Maryland Defenders Union
AFSCME Council 3, Local 423

Maryland Judiciary Employees
AFSCME Council 3, Local 3674