



May 2, 2017

To My Fellow Lawyers & Friends:

I love lawyers. I love being a lawyer. I've represented plaintiffs (not always successfully), and I've represented defendants (again, not always successfully). I have represented popular clients, and those who weren't so popular. I've served as general counsel for the state's largest employer, and now, I've hung a shingle. I've worked in Tuscaloosa and Montgomery. I've made arguments in almost every circuit in this state from the 1st to the 41st, from Autauga County to Winston County, from Florence in the north to Mobile in the south, from Livingston in the west to Opelika in the east. I've won some and probably lost more. My work has taken me to 20 other states and Puerto Rico, and I've consumed a lot of great food along the way – from places with too many forks to those with plastic sporks. I've helped negotiate more than one settlement worth over \$1 billion, and I've collected a few hundred dollars for a seamstress who worked part-time at the dry cleaner. I've mediated more cases than I can remember and many that I will never forget. Some were large, some were small, and some were simply healing. I've served as an arbitrator. I've taken depositions, tried cases, argued appeals, closed real estate loans (residential and commercial), repossessed cars and mobile homes, foreclosed homes and commercial property, represented over one thousand homeowners whose homes were threatened with foreclosure, and defended those accused of crimes. I've argued in bankruptcy courts for debtors and for creditors. I've handled divorces. I've written legislation, lobbied the legislature, and testified before committees both in Montgomery and Washington. I've represented banks and beauticians, lovers and liars, doctors and drug addicts, corporations and clinics. I have been blessed with diverse practice experience.

We have a diverse bar. We have lawyers in cities and lawyers in small towns. Lawyers in firms of all sizes and solo practitioners. Women, men, young, old, black, white, Asian, straight, gay, republicans, democrats, Christians, Jews, atheists, and the list goes on. You name it, and there is someone who fits the bill practicing law in Alabama. I want to represent everyone.

During the process of becoming licensed as a part-time local Methodist pastor, a proud full-time

seminarian sternly and accusatorily asked me how I could possibly reconcile being a lawyer and being a pastor. I explained that it was easy as the roles were quite similar. Like a pastor, a lawyer advocates through speech and word to persuade those who don't necessarily want to hear or believe what is being said. Similarly, a lawyer is a counselor who helps people through some of their darkest days. And, a lawyer is a scholar who interprets writings from the past to give people guidance in the choices they make today. Lawyers and pastors have more in common than either might want to admit. Lawyers help people, and I am proud to be a lawyer.

Our profession faces many challenges, some old and some new. I want to help. I want to ensure all members of our Bar are served by our Bar. I want to enhance the practice of law, not simply preserve it. Everyone who wants to be a lawyer in Alabama should have the best opportunity to enjoy the profession that I love.

I want to serve as your Bar president. I want to work with you as we face these challenges. Lawyers render service. That is our motto, that is our calling, and that is our job. And that is what I want our Bar to do for its members. For everyone.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cooper Shattuck". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some loops and flourishes.

Cooper Shattuck