



**Environmental Justice in the Wake of a Disaster: Dissecting the Connection  
Between Minority Communities and Disasters Through a Legal Lens**

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**Roy Prather** is a Principal in the Baltimore office of Beveridge & Diamond, P.C., an environmental law firm. Roy represents companies and public sector entities in complex environmental and commercial litigation in federal and state courts throughout the United States. This encompasses litigation arising from environmental claims, toxic tort claims involving alleged environmental exposures, environmental issues in commercial transactions and construction, and indemnity disputes. He also assists clients in navigating administrative regulatory proceedings under federal and state environmental laws.

**Barbara Barron** is a nationally distinguished, award-winning civil trial lawyer and Shareholder at MehaffyWeber. In both the Texas Silica and Asbestos MDL, she is the defense liaison counsel. She coordinates nationally the defense of a number of clients in toxic tort cases and has defended thousands of disaster-related claims. Barbara graduated magna cum laude from the University of Houston Law Center and summa cum laude from Baylor University. She is licensed in Texas, California, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Oklahoma.

**Ricardo A. Woods** is a trial lawyer and shareholder in Burr & Forman, LLP's Mobile office. He is a creative problem solver who provides his clients with innovative and cost effective solutions and strategies. Ricardo has first-chair jury trial experience, as well as extensive pre-trial litigation experience. He has successfully defended matters, which included allegations of wrongful death, paralysis, severe bodily injuries, and toxic torts. Ricardo currently serves as the Chair of DRI's Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

**Professor Victor B. Flatt** is the Dwight Olds Chair in Law and the Faculty Co-Director of the Environment, Energy, and Natural Resources (EENR) Center. He was previously the inaugural O'Quinn Chair in Environmental Law at UHLC from 2002-2009. He also held the inaugural Taft Distinguished Professorship in Environmental Law at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill from 2008-2017. Professor Flatt is a recognized expert on environmental law, climate law, and energy law.

## **Summary**

Since 1980, the U.S. has sustained 258 weather and climate disasters with a cumulative cost exceeding \$1.75 trillion. These events expose social structures that put marginalized communities in harm's way. This panel will examine disaster preparedness and explore the social justice implications, as well as the resulting litigation.

## **Materials**

[Holding Polluters Accountable in Times of Climate and COVID Risk: The Problems with “Emergency” Enforcement Waivers](#)