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Free wills and estate planning provided to CMS employees

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (November 15, 2011) — On Saturday November 12, Alston & Bird partnered with Duke Energy and Legal Services of the Southern Piedmont to provide free wills, estate planning and powers of attorney for Charlotte-Mecklenburg School employees. *Wills for Schools* was a one-day event modeled after the *Wills for Heroes* program, a successful project that the N.C. Bar has been running for several years which serves first responders—fire fighters, police and EMT. *Wills for Schools* served people on the front lines of public schools—teachers and school support staff.

“When we first discussed a pro bono project with Duke Energy, CMS was an easy choice,” says Brian Ellsworth, Alston & Bird partner and Pro Bono Chair office. “Our public schools are under tremendous pressure, and CMS employees are often asked to make do with extremely limited resources. Donating our time to help them is one small way of thanking them for their hard work and dedication.”

This event brought together approximately 79 volunteers from Alston & Bird (34 volunteers), Duke Energy (22 volunteers), Legal Services of Southern Piedmont (6 volunteers), Charlotte School of Law (9 volunteers), and other local enterprises (8 volunteers) to prepare wills and other estate planning documents for local public school teachers and other school employees. The team completed wills and related estate planning documents for 80 very appreciative

clients. The estimated value of pro bono services provided was more than \$80,000.

The clinic was held in Alston & Bird's office on South Tryon Street from 9am until 5pm Saturday November 12th.

About Alston & Bird

With more than 800 attorneys, Alston & Bird is a leading national AmLaw 100 firm. The firm has built a reputation as one of the country's best employers, appearing on *FORTUNE* magazine's ranking of the "100 Best Companies to Work For" twelve years in a row, more often and more highly ranked than any other law firm in the United States. The firm has offices in Atlanta, Brussels, Charlotte, Dallas, Los Angeles, New York, Research Triangle, Washington and Ventura County.

About Legal Services of Southern Piedmont

Legal Services of Southern Piedmont's mission is to assure a full measure of justice for those in need. LSSP provides a wide range of civil legal assistance to eligible low-income persons in the Charlotte metropolitan area and west-central NC. LSSP accomplishes its mission through a variety of legal advocacy strategies including individual advice and representation, community education and outreach, representation of groups, self-help remedies, collaboration with other agencies, community economic development, legislative and administrative advocacy, and impact litigation.