



alaska judicial council

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Revised Press Release

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The Alaska Judicial Council recommends that Alaskans vote “**YES**” to retain 33 judges eligible to appear on the ballot in 2016. This press release explains the Council’s evaluation process and presents its recommendations.

The Council’s review of judges’ performances, and its recommendations based on this review, are for Alaskan voters’ information as they decide in the general election on November 8, 2016 whether judges should serve another term in office.

To help voters make informed decisions about judges on the ballot, the Alaska Judicial Council reviewed detailed performance information about each of the judges standing for retention. The Council evaluated each judge’s:

- Legal ability,
- Impartiality and fairness,
- Integrity,
- Temperament,
- Diligence, and
- Overall performance, including judgment and ethical conduct.

Based on the results of these evaluations, the six appointed members of the Alaska Judicial Council unanimously make the following recommendations to the voters.

Vote “**YES**” to retain

The Alaska Judicial Council unanimously recommends that Alaskans vote “**Yes**” to retain these judges eligible to appear on the ballot in 2016:

- Supreme Court Justice Joel H. Bolger;
- Supreme Court Justice Peter J. Maassen;
- Court of Appeals Judge Marjorie K. Allard;
- Superior Court Judge David V. George, Sitka (First Judicial District);

- Superior Court Judge Philip M. Pallenberg, Juneau (First Judicial District);
- Superior Court Judge Trevor Stephens, Ketchikan (First Judicial District);
- District Court Judge Thomas Nave, Juneau (First Judicial District);
- Superior Court Judge Eric A. Aarseth, Anchorage (Third Judicial District);
- Superior Court Judge Catherine M. Easter, Anchorage (Third Judicial District);
- Superior Court Judge Erin B. Marston, Anchorage (Third Judicial District);
- Superior Court Judge Mark Rindner, Anchorage (Third Judicial District);
- Superior Court Judge Kevin Saxby, Anchorage (Third Judicial District);
- Superior Court Judge Jack Smith, Anchorage (Third Judicial District);
- District Court Judge Leslie N. Dickson, Anchorage (Third Judicial District);
- District Court Judge J. Patrick Hanley, Anchorage (Third Judicial District);
- District Court Judge Jennifer Stuart Henderson, Anchorage (Third Judicial District);
- District Court Judge Alex M. Swiderski, Anchorage (Third Judicial District);
- District Court Judge David R. Wallace, Anchorage (Third Judicial District);
- District Court Judge Pamela Scott Washington, Anchorage (Third Judicial District);
- Superior Court Judge Anna M. Moran, Kenai (Third Judicial District);
- District Court Judge Margaret L. Murphy, Homer (Third Judicial District);
- Superior Court Judge Kari Kristiansen, Palmer (Third Judicial District);
- Superior Court Judge Vanessa H. White, Palmer (Third Judicial District);
- District Court Judge David Zwink, Palmer (Third Judicial District);
- District Court Judge Daniel Schally, Valdez District Court (Third Judicial District);
- Superior Court Judge Douglas L. Blankenship, Fairbanks (Fourth Judicial District);
- Superior Court Judge Bethany S. Harbison, Fairbanks (Fourth Judicial District);
- Superior Court Judge Jane F. Kauvar, Fairbanks (Fourth Judicial District);

- Superior Court Judge Michael A. MacDonald, Fairbanks (Fourth Judicial District);
- District Court Judge Matthew Christian, Fairbanks (Fourth Judicial District);
- District Court Judge Patrick S. Hammers, Fairbanks (Fourth Judicial District);
- Superior Court Judge Dwayne McConnell, Bethel (Fourth Judicial District);
- District Court Judge Nathaniel Peters, Bethel (Fourth Judicial District).

The Alaska Judicial Council is an independent citizen’s commission established in Article IV of Alaska’s Constitution. The members include three non-attorneys who are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the legislature, and three attorneys who are appointed by the Alaska Bar Association Board of Governors. By seniority they are:

- Ken Kreitzer, public member from Juneau;
- Aimee Oravec, attorney member from Fairbanks;
- Dave Parker, public member from Wasilla;
- Jim Torgerson, attorney member from Anchorage;
- Loretta Bullard, public member from Nome;
- Galen Paine, attorney member from Sitka.

The Council members volunteer their time and serve staggered six year terms. The Chief Justice of the Alaska Supreme Court, currently Chief Justice Craig Stowers, presides as chair ex officio, and only votes when his vote can change the result.

The Alaska Judicial Council conducted an in-depth evaluation of the judicial performance of each judge standing for retention. For its recommendations this year, the Council evaluated the judges’ legal ability, impartiality and fairness, integrity, temperament, diligence, and overall performance, including judgment. To obtain this information:

- The Council surveyed thousands of Alaskans including peace and probation officers, court employees, attorneys, jurors, social workers and guardians ad litem.
- The Council solicited specific written feedback from attorneys who appeared before the judges in recent cases.
- The Council tracked how often a judge was disqualified from presiding over a case and how often a trial judge was affirmed or reversed on appeal.
- The Council examined any civil or criminal litigation involving a judge, a judge’s credit information; APOC and court system conflict-of-interest statements filed by a judge; any disciplinary files or actions involving a judge; and whether a judge’s paycheck was withheld for an untimely decision.

- The Council listened to court proceedings, and interviewed judges, attorneys, court staff, and others as necessary.
- The Council solicited feedback from the public about judges on its website and held a statewide public hearing.

The Alaska Judicial Council publicizes more information about the performance of judges than any other judicial evaluation entity in the country.

Alaskan voters can learn more about the Alaska Judicial Council's evaluation of the performance of judges by visiting the Council's website at:

[knowyouralaskajudges.comhttp://www.ajc.state.ak.us/](http://www.ajc.state.ak.us/).

The State of Alaska's Official Elections Pamphlets, published by the Division of Elections in October, will include the Council's recommendations and summaries of the Council's evaluations.