

ICJL 2018 JUDICIAL RETENTION QUESTIONNAIRE

ANSWERS OF CHRISTOPHER L. WEBER – SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

1. Answer: On December 1, 2018 I will have completed twelve years as a Circuit Judge in the Second Judicial Circuit. During this timeframe I have presided over a broad range of cases, from petty traffic offenses to murder, from small claims to seven figure tort cases. I have presided over numerous criminal and civil jury trials and bench trials. This experience has been very valuable, as I believe the best way to learn is by doing. I have done my best to maintain order in the courtrooms I have presided in, and have also done my best to treat every person in the courtroom with respect. Prior to taking the bench, I spent twelve years as an attorney in a small-town general practice law firm, during which time I handled a wide variety of matters. Finally, I preside primarily in Crawford County, where I have lived my entire life, except for my time at the University of Illinois. I was raised in Crawford County, my wife was raised in Crawford County, and we have raised our children in Crawford County. I care deeply about my community, and hope that my work on the bench contributes to making Crawford County a better place for all its residents.
2. Answer: One action I am proud of is the establishment of the Crawford County Drug Court in 2011. I give credit to many in making the Crawford County Drug Court a success, including to our drug court team and to Renew, a Section 501(c)(3) organization that raises funds to assist our drug court. The vast majority of felony cases and almost all child abuse and neglect cases in Crawford County are directly or indirectly the result of drug abuse. The Crawford County Drug Court works to end the cycle of drug abuse in our community. Reducing drug abuse not only results in savings to taxpayers by housing less prisoners in IDOC, but also results in lower crime rates across all categories.
3. Answer: I continue to believe that the court system must think outside the box when it comes to dealing with substance abuse in rural communities. Tax dollars might be better spent if the rural counties could be allocated another probation officer who could work to coordinate inpatient and outpatient services for drug abusing defendants, as well as possibly provide “in-house” counseling services and more frequent drug testing within the probation offices.
4. Answer: In rural counties, such as the ones where I hold court, it is essential for judges to strive for high marks in each of these areas in order to have the respect of the citizens. Judges are seen in the community, most know the judge when they see him or her at the grocery store, at ballgames, etc. Therefore, we must conduct ourselves both in public and on the bench in a very dignified, yet down to earth manner. This is what I strive to do. I have been rated for previous elections by the Illinois State Bar Association’s Judicial Advisory Poll, and have been satisfied with my scores. I will be rated again for this election, and hope that my scores are consistent with my previous ratings.