

September 19, 2018

Circuit Judge Troy Holland
Thirteenth Judicial Circuit

RE: Response to ICJL 2018 Judicial Retention Questionnaire

1. State the main reason why voters should return you to the bench.

The citizens of the 13th Judicial Circuit (LaSalle, Grundy, and Bureau Counties) should return me to the bench because of my commitment on a daily basis to be a hard working, fair judge with integrity. I treat all who enter my courtroom—the parties, attorneys, jurors, and my court staff—with dignity and respect. I prepare extensively for each case, give careful consideration to the position of both sides, provide for a fair hearing and render timely decisions. Whether issuing my decisions from the bench or by written ruling, I explain my reasoning after thorough review of the facts and applicable law.

2. What actions have you taken as a judge of which you are most proud?

I am proud of consistently applying the principles cited above in presiding over trials, reaching my decisions, and my record of those decisions being affirmed by higher courts. I am proud of my willingness, methods and ability to settle cases between parties and to take whatever time is necessary to assist the parties in achieving that goal. I supported our Circuit's rule changes to allow cameras in the courtroom that provides our citizens with more openness and transparency during court proceedings. As a Resident Circuit Judge, I am proud of working with my fellow Resident Circuit Judge to significantly reduce the law library expenses of print books, while increasing the number of computer terminals that provide free access to Westlaw legal research to the public and attorneys who use the law library. I am proud that the judges within our county adopted a mortgage foreclosure mediation program that has required lenders to work with homeowners to explore options to resolve delinquent mortgages prior to formal litigation going forward.

3. Name and describe one change you would make in the Illinois court system.

I would improve all litigants' access to our court system and eliminate procedural inconsistencies among our judicial circuits and counties of the now-mandated electronic filing system. I would increase the use of available technology in a cost-effective manner to provide user-friendly information and instructions to our citizens and attorneys who utilize the court system. I support the Illinois Supreme Court's Access to Justice Initiative to implement statewide standardized forms and instructions as a way of assisting self-represented litigants. However, more statewide forms and instructions need to be approved and made available.

4. One prominent Illinois judicial evaluation survey asks attorneys to evaluate candidates on Integrity, Legal Ability and Temperament. Critique yourself in these four areas as to how you personally approach your job as judge.

My ratings in past judicial evaluations have scored me highly in all of these traits. Being a judge is a position of service to the citizens who have elected me and I am grateful for that honor. I take the oath of office and duties to impartially apply the law seriously and with a firm commitment to administer justice equally. In regard to my personal approach to these traits in my job as a judge, I state as follows:

Integrity - I believe in straight-forward honesty. I conduct my courtroom duties in that way. I am guided by high ethical principles and adhere to the Illinois Code of Judicial Conduct. I understand and appreciate the privilege it is to be a judge and the responsibilities of serving on the bench both in and out of the courtroom.

Legal Ability - While I believe my diverse legal experience of 18 years prior to becoming a judge reflects my legal ability, I am always honing my knowledge and decision-making process. I have presided over complex civil jury trials that have further increased my knowledge and ability to remain a judge. I work hard to assure my rulings are well reasoned with careful review of cited legal authority and my own research. In complex matters, I typically provide written rulings with my reasoning and authority explained. I welcome opportunities to attend further training. In addition to the required Judicial Education Conference, I have attended other continuing judicial education sessions such as the Advanced Judicial Academy.

Temperament - I recognize that I serve the parties within my courtroom. My conduct as judge is consistent, even-keeled and even-tempered. My disposition is calm, as I recognize that I must be a calming influence in a courtroom, rather than added fuel to a fire. Sometimes it is necessary to be firm but professional with parties and attorneys, especially in the high-stakes, highly-contested trials over which I preside.