



Illinois Civil Justice League

## ICJL 2018 Judicial Retention Questionnaire

**Martin C. Kelley  
Cook County Circuit Judge**

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

**I believe voters should return me to the bench for another term because in the last six years I have shown that I possess the legal knowledge and temperament of a good judge.**

### **Legal knowledge**

**Prior to be elected in 2012 I had over twenty years experience in many forms of litigation at both the state and federal trial courts. In the state courts I litigated cases in the law, criminal, municipal, probate, and chancery divisions in Cook County.**

**Prior to being a judge, I served as a chair- qualified arbitrator in the Cook County Mandatory Arbitration System. Further, I was also a prosecutor/ representative of the Illinois Secretary of State Driver Services Division. In that capacity, I represented the Secretary of State's interest at hearings when citizens request to have their driving privileges reinstated, usually after one or more DUI convictions.**

**As a judge I have done my very best to remain current by daily research and reading of case law and newly enacted statutes .**

### **Temperament**

**I believe I have shown in the last six years that I possess the appropriate temperament of a good judge, specifically possessing the qualities of patience, objectivity, and humility.**

**On August 6th, 2005, I awoke with pain between my shoulders which steadily increased during the day until I finally drove myself to the Lutheran General Emergency room. Emergency surgery was performed there at 2: 00 a.m. on August 7, 2005 and another on August 8, 2005. A disk at level C6-7 had ruptured, pinning my spinal cord inward causing a paralysis to take over my body. At the time of the surgery, the neurosurgeon explained to my family and me that this was a "Christopher Reeve" type of injury. After surgery, I remained paralyzed in both legs and my right arm. After a two-week stay at Lutheran General, I was transferred via ambulance to the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago where I resided and engaged in a grueling physical therapy regime which lasted for seven weeks. I now**

enjoy what my neurosurgeon refers to as a miraculous recovery with full mobility.

**I believe all of this is relevant to your evaluation in that this experience has enhanced my patience, objectivity and humility. These are three of the most important qualities of a good judge.**

### **Patience**

**I have always considered myself a patient person, but since August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2005, I have a renewed respect for this quality in that physical rehabilitation is very often a slow process and is often described by doctors as therapists as like watching grass grow.**

### **Objectivity**

**The second quality of objectivity has also been enhanced in that someone like me who has experienced a life changing event has to set aside all preconceptions of self and start with a fresh slate in perceiving oneself and life in general.**

### **Humility**

**Finally, I believe I have more humility now than before August 6, 2005 in that I appreciate the necessity of the help of others in the rehabilitation process (e.g. physical therapy).**

**I have tried my whole life both personally and professionally to be considered for what I believe to be one of the most important opportunities for someone with a law degree, that being the position of judge.**

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

**I am most proud of the manner in which I conducted myself when I presided in the Parentage courtroom. As the Parentage judge I regularly dealt with issues involving child abuse, child neglect, delinquent child support and orders of protection. It was a very emotionally charged courtroom often involving unstable and volatile parents. I consistently received favorable reviews from the lawyers, litigants, fellow judges and bar associations on my demeanor and legal knowledge.**

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

**I believe the presence and use of nonprofit mediation services should be expanded to resolve civil disputes. This would minimize or even eliminate the delay and cost of litigation.**

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

**As a judge I have always tried to conduct myself with intellectual honesty and fairness.**

**I believe that I have decided all my cases with a heightened sense of neutrality and open mindedness.**

**As previously stated I believe I possess the temperament which makes a judge a good judge specifically always behaving with patience, objectivity and humility.**

**Each day I try to improve on my legal ability by remaining current on changes in case law and statutes which have an impact on any civil court room and would imagine this to be a daily/career long endeavor.**