

PATRICIA O'BRIEN SHEAHAN
Candidate for Retention as a Circuit Court Judge
Current Assignment: Law Division – Motion Section
50 W. Washington Street, Courtroom 2207

Via Email (questionnaire@icjl.org)

September 30, 2020

Mr. John J. Pastuovic
President
Illinois Civil Justice League

Re: **Illinois Civil Justice League Judicial Retention Questionnaire**

Dear Mr. Pastuovic and Members of the Illinois Civil Justice League:

I appreciate your efforts to better educate the Illinois electorate on judicial retention. In response to your questionnaire, I have served as a Cook County Circuit Court Judge for the last six years. I have been found “Recommended” or “Qualified” by the Chicago Bar Association and every member of the Alliance of Bar Associations for Judicial Screening that has released their findings (currently 11 of 12).

I am qualified to be retained as a judge of the Circuit Court of Cook County because I embrace the responsibility of my position. I work hard to be well prepared for every matter that comes before me and I am committed to ensuring that the law is fairly and justly applied in each and every case assigned to me.

I am proud of the way I manage my court docket. Prior to the COVID-19 shutdown, I enjoyed presiding over a high-volume courtroom and engaging with the numerous attorneys and *pro se* litigants who appeared before me each day. Since the pandemic, I have kept up with my scheduled hearings from home by Zoom and I have issued scores of written rulings on all contested motions. I also conduct pre-trials via Zoom and issue approximately 20 court orders a day. I try to be thorough and clear in my rulings to ensure both sides understand the findings and basis of my rulings. I take pride in ensuring that my call is run as efficiently as possible and that matters are heard and decided upon as timely as possible.

With regard to a change I would make in the Illinois court system, the Circuit Court of Cook County, along with all other counties in the State of Illinois, should transition to a unified electronic docketing system, similar to the Case Management/ Electronic Case Files (CM/ECF) system in federal court. All litigants should have free review access to filed court documents. In our public court system, it should not be so hard to access a complaint filed against you or to gain access to review a judgment entered against you at any time within a ten-year period. I think providing easier and free access to court documents for self-represented litigants would provide a significant step towards a more fair, less expensive process and arguably a more expeditious process.

Lastly, I know that my integrity, impartiality, legal ability, and temperament define me as a judge. I believe I have earned the respect of my colleagues on the bench and the litigants who appear before me because I work hard, treat people fairly and value the public's trust and the great responsibility of my position.

I hope the Illinois Civil Justice League will recommend a "Yes" vote regarding my retention as a circuit court judge.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patricia O'Brien Sheahan', written in a cursive style.

Patricia O'Brien Sheahan
Candidate for Retention as a Circuit Court Judge