



**Candidate: Eric James Neumann**

**5th Circuit Court, Cini Vacancy**

1. State the qualifications and experiences that make you qualified to serve on the bench in Illinois.

**I am a ten year trial veteran with experience in both defense and prosecution. In law school I practiced for an additional two years under a limited practice license with the Southern Illinois University Elder Legal Clinic assisting senior citizens in nearly all areas of law. Having been a prosecutor for the last eight years it has always been my job to seek justice, not merely attempt to convince a court to alter the law to help a particular client.**

2. 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 they make you qualified to serve on the bench.

**It is always difficult to evaluate oneself, but my integrity is one of my most prized traits. I am a great believer in the system that we have whereby a judge may step aside when he feels that he is likely to show a bias toward one party or the other. In this election I have refused to accept any campaign donations in order to avoid conflicts of interest. With ten years of experience working in a setting where I am in court on a daily basis I have the experience necessary to understand the law and to know when I need to perform additional research in order to make a just ruling. I have always striven to be unfailingly polite in the courtroom and to cooperate with other attorneys in the setting of court-dates and attempting to frame the issues in dispute to reduce the amount of court-time necessary to reach final resolution.**

3. Describe the case in which you are most proud of your work as a lawyer.

**The case I am most proud of is People vs. Ernest Rose. The Rose case involved a man who owned a number of horses that he failed care for and feed properly. This case involved a number of motion hearings, extensive issues research, and a trial. In the end Dr. Rose was found guilty of 176 counts of Animal Cruelty, Violation of an Owners Duties, and Improper Disposal of Dead Animals. One of the issues in the case was whether the horses and their foals would be forfeited and who would pay for their care. At the trial level all horses and foals were forfeited and Dr. Rose was ordered to pay over \$30,000 to the county.**

4. Name one change you would make in the Illinois court system.

**The ability of a Judge to take a case from the jury and enter a verdict notwithstanding the verdict or a directed verdict should be removed. The jury is the last vestige of direct governance left in our system and when a party chooses to have a jury make a decision the judge should not be allowed to take that**

**decision from them. This is a change that should be enacted by the legislature as a restriction on the power of the judiciary.**

5. Are there civil litigation reforms that you would like to see enacted to remedy particular problems that you have detected, either as a practicing lawyer or as a sitting judge? Are there reforms that would benefit the civil justice system? What needs to be changed? Should the enactment of any such changes be the province of the legislature, the Supreme Court or by Constitutional amendment?

**(not answered)**

6. Do you believe that our judicial system adequately deters and penalizes frivolous litigation? If not, what reforms would you like to see?

**The local court system does not currently deter or penalize frivolous litigation. No actual reforms are needed as the system allows for the punishment of attorneys that file frivolous pleadings; what is needed is greater enforcement by the sitting judges.**

7. Do you believe the Illinois Constitution precludes legislative establishment of limitations on civil damages? Are there or should there be distinctions among economic, non-economic and punitive damages?

**I cannot answer question seven as it asks me to interpret the constitution. If a law establishing limitation on damages were to be enacted and come before me as a judge it is unethical for me to pre-rule on that issue. I am of the opinion that answering this question would violate the Illinois judicial ethics rules.**