



Illinois Civil Justice League

Candidate: TJ Somer

Cook County Circuit Court, 15th Subcircuit, Phelan Vacancy

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

Please see attached narrative/biography.

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.

Please see attached narrative.

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

I served as Defense Counsel in a Criminal case wherein my client was charged as an adult with participating in a gang related murder committed by a group of individuals. Due to my prompt involvement and application of important defense strategies, I was able to ensure that my clients Constitutional Rights remained unviolated, which precluded the prosecution from developing a strong case against my client, and thus, protected my clients ability to have a fair trial.

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

Enact a mandatory civil mediation system, and Restorative Justice Mediation Program for the Juvenile Courts system.

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?

See number 4 above.

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

No. But, I am honestly uncertain as to what might serve as an adequate remedy - perhaps the creation of an independent review board of attorneys to investigate complaints.

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 don't believe there should be arbitrary limits on economic or non-economic damages.