

For immediate release

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*18th
Arapahoe*

October 17, 1986

EVALUATION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS RETENTION OF 18TH DISTRICT JUDGES

The Citizens Committee for Evaluation of Judges recently finished its seven-month investigation into the performances of five district and county judges up for retention in November, 1986, from the 18th Judicial District. (The district includes Arapahoe, Douglas, Elbert, and Lincoln Counties.)

The committee has been meeting weekly to compile and evaluate information gained from surveys of bar associations, court personnel, sheriff's departments, and personal interviews with the judges. As a result, the committee is making the following recommendations to the voting public concerning these judges. The five judges recommended to remain on the bench display the legal competency, fairness, industriousness, dedication and job performance qualities that are essential for people holding these positions.

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RETENTION OF 18TH DISTRICT JUDGES

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DISTRICT JUDGES:

John P. Gately - Recommended for Retention

One of the strengths the committee saw in Judge Gately--following a personal interview and review of surveys of jurors, court personnel and other judicial system personnel--was his absolute belief in the judicial system.

While time management of cases is somewhat frustrating to Judge Gately, he believes that hurrying the system along is inappropriate. He believes that justice sometimes is slow and that it cannot be hurried without jeopardizing due process for all parties involved.

All data reviewed by the committee indicates that Judge Gately is a man of integrity and fairness. Survey results from court personnel confirm Judge Gately's view that he has a strong handle on the job he is doing and does it well. He weighs everything before he makes a decision--emphasized to the committee by the careful manner in which the judge weighed the answers to the questions addressed to him in the interview. He also was very deliberate in his answers, a trait pointed out by those who appeared as jurors or who have observed him in the courtroom. Judge Gately believes strongly in the quality of justice versus the quantity of justice.

Richard L. Kaylor - Recommended for Retention

On the bench, Judge Kaylor maintains control of his court. He is an attentive listener and reflects a logical decision-making process in his decisions from the bench. Judge Kaylor's cases include both criminal and juvenile matters. He is a very sensitive person and appears very concerned at a higher level with the value-systems changes facing today's society.

He feels the best about his role in making dysfunctional family situations functional. Judge Kaylor's case load is heavy, as is the case load for all District 18 judges. He advocates the addition of three judges to the 18th Judicial District to

Richard L. Kaylor (continued)

alleviate these problems.

His marriage to a supervisory social worker in Arapahoe County raised some questions in the minds of the committee and the issue of a potential conflict of interest was raised in the personal interview. However, the committee feels confident that Judge Kaylor has addressed the potential for a conflict and that it is not a significant factor in the election to retain him.

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COUNTY COURT JUDGES

Marguerite T. Langstaff (Arapahoe) - Recommended for Retention

The committee found Judge Langstaff to be an energetic, highly motivated person who is deeply committed to the improvement of our judicial system in the county courts. She is currently presiding judge in the Arapahoe County Court.

In the interview with the committee, Judge Langstaff indicated her goals included working to improve her technical legal skills. Case management and docket-control management techniques are being instituted by her in her courtroom.

She has a strong sense of organization and attended the National Judicial College, Reno, Nev., for a two-week session on General Jurisdiction Special Court Session in November 1982. The committee also considered her attendance at several other conferences on courts, court procedures and family and juvenile courts as a plus.

Judge Langstaff is also active in the community and is a participant on the Executive Council of the Family Law Section of the Colorado Bar Association; the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges; the American and the Colorado Bar Associations; Zonta Professional Women's Organization; Phi Alpha Delta, a legal fraternity; the Arapahoe County Medical Auxiliary and the Town and Gown Society.

Jack F. Smith (Arapahoe) - Recommended for Retention

The committee is impressed with Judge Smith's legal knowledge, sentencing consistency, emotional stability, situational flexibility, and enthusiasm for his responsibilities. The committee is particularly impressed with Judge Smith's educational outreach efforts. He welcomes school and community groups to his courtroom and makes time available to discuss the judicial system with them. Given the high caseload and crowded dockets of the county courts, we believe this effort on his part is particularly noteworthy.

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Jack F. Smith (continued)

Noting that DUI cases are approximately 15% of his caseload and approximately 90% of his trial load, Judge Smith is hard on drunk drivers; a second time offender can expect to serve time in Jail.

Although firm, he is also fair and believes strongly in the rehabilitative effects of criminal penalties.

Donna Kirby (Elbert) - Recommended for Retention

Judge Kirby keeps abreast of changes in the county judicial arena by her membership in a variety of associations, including the Colorado Council of State Trial Judges, service on the executive board of the Colorado Association of County Judges; and serving as president-elect of the Colorado Association of County Judges.

Because of her previous background as a court clerk, Judge Kirby has a number of years of experience in dealing with the judicial system at the county level and managing a courtroom. She appears--through the citizen committee interview and through the surveys the committee received--adept at finding out what she does not know and in seeking counsel from other judges if she feels her own background does not prepare her to handle a specific case.

Judge Kirby gains high marks for her conscientiousness and the committee believed that her experience on the bench, coupled with her ready acceptance of the areas of her weaknesses, were pluses.

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