Judicial Merit Selection Commission

Sen. Glenn F. McConnell, Chairman

Rep. F. G. Delleney, Jr., V-Chairman

Rep. Alan D. Clemmons

John P. Freeman

John Davis Harrell

Sen. John M. “Jake” Knotts, Jr.

Rep. David J. Mack, III

Amy Johnson McLester

Sen. Floyd Nicholson

H. Donald Sellers

 Jane O. Shuler, Chief Counsel

 Paula G. Benson

Emma Dean

 Patrick G. Dennis

 J.J. Gentry

 Bonnie G. Anzelmo



Post Office Box 142

Columbia, South Carolina 29202

(803) 212-6623

March 11, 2011

To: Members of the South Carolina Bench and Bar, Members of the Judiciary, and Clerks of Court:

The Judicial Merit Selection Commission would like your input in the General Assembly's screening of candidates for judicial office. The Commission must determine whether each candidate for judicial office is qualified to serve, and in this regard it seeks the opinion of practicing attorneys, members of the judiciary, clerks of court, and sheriffs as to each candidate's fitness for the bench. Please note that this request is separate and distinct from the survey responses requested by the South Carolina Bar’s Judicial Qualifications Committee.

The Commission's ability to determine whether a particular candidate is fit for service on the bench is only as good as its knowledge of the candidate. The Commission conducts a thorough investigation of each candidate, relying in part on responses to the bench/bar questionnaire. The best and most reliable information is that from a known source with first-hand knowledge of the candidate. The second best information is that from a source who, while anonymous, cites specific occurrences or patterns of behavior that would speak to the candidate's fitness for the bench. The Commission seeks both types of information for its investigation. Please complete the questionnaire and include as much detailed information as possible, or contact the Commission directly with information on any or all of the following candidates:

**Family Court**

**4th Circuit, Seat 2 Bryan W. Braddock,** Hartsville, S.C.

**4th Circuit, Seat 2 The Honorable Cely Anne Baker Brigman**, Darlington, S.C.

**4th Circuit, Seat 2 John McIver “Jay” Ervin III**, Darlington, S.C.

**4th Circuit, Seat 2 The Honorable Salley Huggins McIntyre**, Dillon, S.C.

**4th Circuit, Seat 2 James Alexander “Alex” Stanton IV**, Hartsville, S.C.

**13th Circuit, Seat 3 Catherine Carr Christophillis,** Greenville, S.C.

**13th Circuit, Seat 3 Harry L. “Don” Phillips, Jr.,** Greenville, S.C.

**13th Circuit, Seat 3 Thomas J. Quinn**, Greenville, S.C

**13th Circuit, Seat 3 The Honorable Michael D. Stokes,** Taylors, S.C.

**14th Circuit, Seat 3 The Honorable Catherine D. Badgett,** Ridgeland, S.C.

**14th Circuit, Seat 3 Sally G. Calhoun**, Beaufort, S.C.

**14th Circuit, Seat 3 Diane P. DeWitt,** Beaufort, S.C.

**14th Circuit, Seat 3 Deborah Ann Malphrus,** Ridgeland, S.C.

**Master-in-Equity**

**Aiken County Maurice A. Griffith,** Aiken, S.C.

**Dorchester County Paul B. Ferrara III,** North Charleston, S.C.

**Dorchester County The Honorable Maité Murphy,** Summerville, S.C.

**Dorchester County William Henry Sloan, Jr.** Summerville, S.C.

Your responses to this questionnaire may be anonymous and will be kept strictly confidential. While anonymous questionnaires will not be used as evidence of a judicial candidate's qualifications or lack thereof, the Commission will use the questionnaire responses during its investigative process. Comments may identify potential areas of concern such as a pattern of poor judicial temperament, ethical violations, or other inappropriate conduct that would warrant more intensive investigation and examination by the Commission. **If you wish to testify concerning an area of concern about a candidate, you must file a formal complaint with the Commission on or before Noon, Monday, April 4, 2011. (Please note this Commission will not utilize responses to this questionnaire as a formal complaint.)**

 The Commission now utilizes e-mail as the main method to distribute the questionnaire. You have the option of using a questionnaire located on the Judicial Merit Selection Commission homepage, [www.scstatehouse.gov/html-pages/judmerit.html](http://www.scstatehouse.gov/html-pages/judmerit.html). This questionnaire can be downloaded, completed, and returned by e-mail, or, to maintain the confidentiality of the process, completed and mailed to the Commission address. The e-mail address for the Commission is: jms@scsenate.gov. If you would like to comment on more than one candidate, please photocopy the questionnaire. Be sure to indicate the candidate's name at the top of each questionnaire.

**The screening process is currently underway, so please return the questionnaires using the U.S. Mail or e-mail by Noon, Monday, April 4, 2011.**  If you have questions or if you have information you would like to give to the Commission directly, please call 803-212-6623. Your assistance is appreciated.

Glenn F. McConnell, Chairman