



JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION
Sworn Statement to be included in Transcript of Public Hearings

Circuit Court
(Incumbent)

Full Name: **Jesse Cordell Maddox, Jr.**

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1. Why do you want to serve another term as a Circuit Court Judge?

I love the work and believe it is the form of public service best suited for my education and experience.

2. Do you plan to serve your full term if re-elected?

Yes

3. Do you have any plans to return to private practice one day?

No

4. Have you met the Constitutional requirements for this position regarding age, residence, and years of practice?

Yes

5. What is your philosophy regarding *ex parte* communications? Are there circumstances under which you could envision *ex parte* communications being tolerated?

Ex Parte communication will be avoided at all cost, except under certain allowed circumstances.

6. If you disclosed something that had the appearance of bias, but you believed it would not actually prejudice your impartiality, what deference would you give a party that requested your recusal? Would you grant such a motion?

I would give great deference to a party who perceived partiality, even if none existed. Unless a recusal would cause undo delay or prejudice to a party, I would grant the motion.

7. How would you handle the appearance of impropriety because of the financial or social involvement of your spouse or a close relative?

This has occurred several times because of my wife's occupation. I always recuse myself to avoid the appearance of impropriety.

8. What standards have you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality?

My office receives small gifts at Christmas, etc. Most of them disappear before I see them and are of minimal value.

9. How would you handle a situation in which you became aware of misconduct or appearance of infirmity of a lawyer or of a fellow judge?

I would honestly discuss any perceived infirmity. If I believe a judge or lawyer was guilty of misconduct, I would report it.

10. Have you engaged in any fund-raising activities with any social, community, or religious organizations? Please describe.

No

11. Do you have any business activities that you would envision remaining involved with if reelected to the bench?

No

12. How do you handle the drafting of orders?

I either draft the orders or ask the prevailing parties to prepare a proposed order and forward to all parties. On most contentious cases, I ask both parties to submit proposed orders in a modifiable form.

13. What methods do you use to ensure that you and your staff meet deadlines?

My administrative assistant uses a fairly sophisticated method of noting mail, orders, etc. when they are received. Each member of our office uses computer calendaring to avoid delays.

14. What is your philosophy on "judicial activism," and what effect should judges have in setting or promoting public policy?

Obviously, Judges are sometimes required to interpret the actions of the legislature. Otherwise, I believe my job is to follow unambiguous law and precedent and attempt to achieve justice for all parties.

15. Canon 4 allows a judge to engage in activities to improve the law, legal system, and administration of justice. What activities do you plan to undertake to further this improvement of the legal system?

I will quite literally go anywhere to speak in an effort to educate the public on the Judicial Branch of Government.

16. Do you feel that the pressure of serving as a judge strains personal relationships (i.e. spouse, children, friends, or relatives)? How do you address this?

Yes it does. I have learned through painful experience that communication with my family and friends are necessary and solve the problem.

17. The following list contains five categories of offenders that would perhaps regularly appear in your court. Discuss your philosophy on sentencing for these classes of offenders.

- a. Repeat offenders:

I generally believe that repeat offenders should be given sentences commensurate with their involvement in the court system. This usually means repeat offenders are given longer and harsher sentences than first time offenders.

- b. Juveniles (that have been waived to the Circuit Court):

In non-violent matters, I attempt to fashion a sentence that educates the juvenile on potential sentences they might face if they do not comply with the law. If the matter is violent I treat juveniles as adults in sentencing.

- c. White collar criminals:

Sentences are fashioned to require repayment of ill begotten gains and first time offenders are often given alternative sentences. When possible, I strongly consider the wishes of victims. I try to ensure restitution of any lost funds.

- d. Defendants with a socially and/or economically disadvantaged background:

I take into account the social and economic backgrounds of all defendants but believe adults should be held responsible for their actions.

- e. Elderly defendants or those with some infirmity:

If the matter is non-violent, I try to fashion alternative sentences if possible. If violent, I treat these defendants the same as all others, even though seriously ill defendants create a substantial financial burden on the corrections system.

18. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality?

No

19. Would you hear a case where you or a member of your family held a *de minimis* financial interest in a party involved?

No

20. Are you a member of any organization or association that, by policy or practice, prohibits or limits its membership on the basis of race, sex, religion, or national origin? If so, please identify the entity and explain if this organization practices invidious discrimination on any basis.

No

21. Have you met the mandatory minimum hours requirement for continuing legal education courses for the last reporting period?

Yes

22. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge and when do these rules apply?

I attempt to listen and show respect to all parties. I work hard to control my demeanor in the courtroom. Without being overbearing, I try to control the courtroom.

23. Do you feel that it is ever appropriate to be angry with a member of the public, especially with a criminal defendant? Is anger ever appropriate in dealing with attorneys or a pro se litigant?

Anger has its place in a courtroom, but only sparingly. When attorneys or parties continually refuse to abide by the rules, a little

anger is sometimes necessary. I try to never get angry with a criminal defendant. If I am angry, I try to quell the emotion. Sentencing requires detached thought unhindered by anger. I am very patient with pro se litigants.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ANSWERS TO THE ABOVE QUESTIONS ARE TRUE AND COMPLETE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

Sworn to before me this ____ day of _____, 2020.

(Signature)

(Print Name)
Notary Public for South Carolina
My commission expires: _____