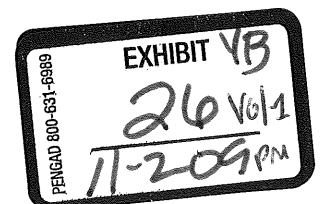


JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION
Sworn Statement to be included in Transcript of Public Hearings
Circuit Court
(New Candidate)

Full Name: Jennifer Peters Wilson
Business Address: 3308 Betty Street
Conway, SC 29527
Business Telephone: 843-918-1373

1. Why do you want to serve as a Circuit Court judge?
When my 11th grade history class sat in Colleton County's Courthouse observing General Sessions Court with Solicitor Buster Murdock, Sr. and a host of defense lawyers, I knew I wanted to be a trial lawyer and a judge. I am blessed to have spent the last twenty-eight years serving the public as a public defender, assistant solicitor, private attorney, and Chief Judge for Myrtle Beach Municipal Court. I feel very strongly that proper judicial temperament and unbiased conduct is necessary to preserve the public's trust in our judicial system. Television programs about judges have eroded some of the public's confidence and that concerns me greatly. I believe I possess the proper temperament and demeanor necessary for a trial judge. For the past nine years, I attempted to treat everyone with respect, dignity, and calmness whether litigant, lawyer, juror or staff. If I am elected I will continue to work hard to instill confidence and integrity in our system. Further, I feel that I am uniquely qualified because of my diverse background and experience. I stand ready to work hard and meet the challenges of a Circuit Court Judge, such as backlogs and technology issues.
2. Do you plan to serve your full term if 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* communications are inappropriate except for scheduling and administrative purposes. My assistant is trained to deal with these matters.
6. What is your philosophy on recusal, especially in situations in which lawyer-legislators, former associates, or law partners are to appear before you?
Judges must always avoid the appearance of impropriety. If a judge cannot be fair and impartial to both sides, then he/she must recuse herself/himself. Lawyer/legislators should not be treated any differently from any other lawyer. Otherwise, they couldn't practice law in state court.



7. 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 grant the motion unless I feel that it is frivolous.
8. How would you handle the appearance of impropriety because of the financial or social involvement of your spouse or a close relative?
Out of an abundance of caution and to preserve the integrity of the system, I would recuse myself.
9. What standards would you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality? I would not accept gifts except from close friends and family for special occasions (birthdays, anniversaries, etc.) I accept social hospitality such as Bar parties and receptions.
10. How would you handle a situation in which you became aware of misconduct of a lawyer or of a fellow judge?
I would discuss it with the lawyer or judge and then report it to the Commission on Lawyer Conduct or the Commission on Judicial Conduct.
11. Are you affiliated with any political parties, boards or commissions that, if you were elected, would need to be re-evaluated? No
12. Do you have any business activities that you would envision remaining involved with if elected to the bench? No
13. If elected, how would you handle the drafting of orders?
I would submit my findings of facts and conclusions of law to the prevailing lawyer to prepare a draft order for review by opposing counsel. If the lawyers agree, then I'll sign the Order. If not, I'll prepare the Order myself.
14. If elected, what methods would you use to ensure that you and your staff meet deadlines?
I would use a "tickler" system to keep up with deadlines. Organization helps to avoid problems with timeliness as well.
15. What is your philosophy on "judicial activism," and what effect should judges have in setting or promoting public policy?
A judge's job is to apply the law to the facts presented. The legislature's job is to enact the laws. Judges are not to promote public policy.
16. Canon 4 allows a judge to engage in activities to improve the law, legal system, and administration of justice. If elected, what activities do you plan to undertake to further this improvement of the legal system?
I would continue to speak at schools and civic organizations about the law and our legal system. If available I'd like to participate in Moot Court Competitions and Law Day.
17. Do you feel that the pressure of serving as a judge would strain personal relationships (i.e. spouse, children, friends, or relatives)? How would you address this?

I don't feel that being a judge should strain personal relationships. My free time is spent with my daughters and a few friends. My daughters have a loving, committed lady who has been taking care of them since they were born. When I travel she will be with my children. We are blessed to have her.

18. 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: Generally I would tend to look more critically at someone who is a repeat offender than a first time offender. Of course some of our crimes provide enhancements. Ultimately, it depends on the particular facts.
 - b. Juveniles (that have been waived to the circuit court): Although our legislature has determined that certain offenses committed by juveniles should be handled in General Sessions Court, it depends on the particular facts as to how I would sentence the juvenile. I would hope to be able to sentence the individual to receive sufficient punishment while being rehabilitated.
 - c. White collar criminals: White collar criminals should be treated just like any other defendant. Usually restitution is involved, I would consider the victims position on punishment and restitution.
 - d. Defendants with a socially and/or economically disadvantaged background: A defendant's background should be considered in mitigation, but not as an excuse to commit a crime.
 - e. Elderly defendants or those with some infirmity: The specific facts and circumstances have to be considered. If special needs are required, I would consider whether the Department of Corrections is equipped to provide what the defendant may need.
19. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality?
No
20. Would you hear a case where you or a member of your family held a *de minimis* financial interest in a party involved?
No
21. Do you belong to any organizations that discriminate based on race, religion, or gender?
No
22. Have you met the mandatory minimum hours requirement for continuing legal education courses?
Yes
23. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge?
A judge should be courteous, patient, respectful, prepared and possess a sense of humor.
24. Would the rules that you expressed in your previous answer apply only

while you are on the bench or in chambers, or would these rules apply seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day?

Seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day.

25. 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 pro se litigants?
Anger is never appropriate for a judge. However, the judge is charged with the responsibility of maintaining order in the courtroom. That requires firmness and sometimes being stern. I've had to deal with defendants getting sick, having seizures, vomiting, as well as being called a b----. I handled each situation calmly and effectively without anger.
26. How much money have you spent on your campaign? If it is over \$100, has that amount been reported to the House and Senate Ethics Committees? Approximately \$29.00 for stamps and paper.
27. If you are a sitting judge, have you used judicial letterhead or the services of your staff while campaigning for this office? No
28. Have you sought or received the pledge of any legislator prior to this date? No
29. Have you sought or been offered a conditional pledge of support by any legislator pending the outcome of your screening? No
30. Have you asked any third parties to contact members of the General Assembly on your behalf before the final and formal screening report has been released? Are you aware of any friends or colleagues contacting members of the General Assembly on your behalf?
No
31. Have you contacted any members of the Judicial Merit Selection Commission? No
32. Are you familiar with the 48-hour rule, which prohibits a candidate from seeking pledges for 48 hours after the draft report has been submitted?
Yes

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

s/ Jennifer Peters Wilson

Sworn to before me this 12th day of August, 2009.

Notary Public for S.C.

My Commission Expires: 01-30-2013