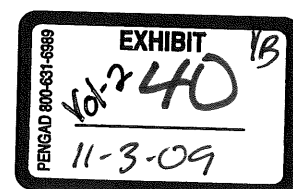


JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION
Sworn Statement to be included in Transcript of Public Hearings
Administrative Law Court
(New Candidate)

Full Name: Latonya Dilligard Edwards
Business Address: South Carolina Second Injury Fund
100 Executive Center Drive Suite 101
Santee Building
Columbia, South Carolina 29210
Business Telephone: (803) 798-2722 extension 129

1. Do you plan to serve your full term if elected? Yes.
2. Do you have any plans to return to private practice one day? No.
3. Have you met the Constitutional requirements for this position regarding age, residence, and years of practice? Yes.
4. What is your philosophy regarding *ex parte* communications? *Ex parte* communication must be avoided because it undermines the integrity of the judicial process. Are there circumstances under which you could envision *ex parte* communications being tolerated? *Ex parte* communications may be tolerated if the communication involves procedural and administrative issues or emergencies provided no party will gain a tactical advantage and all parties are notified and are given an opportunity to respond.
5. What is your philosophy on recusal, especially in situations in which lawyer-legislators, former associates, or law partners are to appear before you? Though I would judge a case based solely on its merits and not based on any personal or professional relationship I have had with the parties, I would recuse myself to avoid the appearance of impropriety. Recusal would also be appropriate if a judge or member of the judge's household had more than a trifling economic interest in the litigation, if a judge has personal knowledge of facts regarding the litigation or if a judge or lawyer with whom the judge was associated served as a lawyer in the matter.
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? Since I believe that a party would not make such a motion frivolously, I would give considerable deference to a motion requesting my recusal and would grant the motion if the situation required it.
7. If elected, what standards would you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality? I would not accept gifts from anyone who had the potential to appear before the Administrative Law



Court nor would I accept a gift that was being given solely because of my position. I would participate in social hospitality as long as it is not extended solely because of my position. I would accept complimentary gifts and awards as long as they are not perceived as influencing a judicial decision. I would accept gifts from relatives and friends as long as they are reasonably valued for the occasion.

8. How would handle a situation in which you became aware of misconduct of a lawyer or of a fellow judge? If I became aware of misconduct of a lawyer or a fellow judge, I would communicate my concern with the lawyer or fellow judge directly, if appropriate, or report the violation to the appropriate entity.
9. Are you affiliated with any political parties, boards or commissions that, if you are elected, would need to be re-evaluated? No.
10. Have you engaged in any fund-raising activities with any political, social, community, or religious organizations? Yes. As a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, I have participated in fundraising events that promote scholarship and community service.
11. How would you handle the drafting of orders? I would provide order instructions to all parties and request that the prevailing party draft the order. I would also require that the prevailing party forward the draft Order to the opposing party to insure that the opposing party has had an opportunity to respond. I would also allow a law clerk to draft and forward orders to the parties so that they will have an opportunity to respond. I would also draft certain orders. Under each of these circumstances, I would ensure that draft orders are thoroughly reviewed and adequately reflect the ruling of the court prior to approval.
12. What method would you use to ensure that you and your staff meet deadlines? I would ensure that duties and responsibilities are prioritized with attainable deadlines. I would ensure that cases are disposed of promptly and efficiently by monitoring the cases to reduce delays and unnecessary costs. I would devote the necessary time to hearing, reviewing, and making a decision on cases even if that requires working after the suggested work hours and on weekends.
13. What is your philosophy on "judicial activism," and what effect should judges have in setting or promoting public policy? I believe that a judge should reasonably interpret the law and not create broad rules that reflect personal or political agendas. Judges should not assume a legislative role by creating law and establishing public policy.
14. Canon 4 allows a judge to engage in activities to improve the law, legal system, and administration of justice. What activities would you plan to undertake to further this improvement of the legal system? I would speak at seminars and continuing legal education events, write articles, and do what is requested within the bounds of the code of

- judicial ethics to improve the legal system. I would also make sure that I am current on emerging issues in administrative law to ensure that justice is effectively and efficiently administered.
15. Do you feel that the pressure of serving as a judge will strain personal relationships (i.e. spouse, children, friends, or relatives)? How would you plan to address this? My family fully supports this endeavor. I am confident that serving as a judge will not strain my personal relationships and I am just as confident that if such a strain does occur the strong bond that I share with them will allow us to arrive at an appropriate resolution.
 16. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality? No.
 17. Would you hear a case where you or a member of your family held a de minimis financial interest in a party involved? While a de minimis financial interest in a party does not require recusal, if the de minimis financial interest would call into question my impartiality, I would recuse myself.
 18. Do you belong to any organizations that discriminate based on race, religion, or gender? No.
 19. Have you met the mandatory minimum hours requirement for continuing legal education courses? Yes.
 20. What percentage of your legal experience has dealt with cases that appear before the Administrative Law Court? Please describe to the Commission your experience in these areas. While serving as Assistant County Attorney for Richland County from 1998-1999, I appeared before the Administrative Law Court on a Motion to Intervene in an action that was brought by the Department of Revenue against a night club. The club was adjacent to a residential community and had received several complaints regarding after hours criminal activity and noise. The Department of Revenue was trying to revoke the club's liquor license and Richland County wanted to be heard based on the considerable amount of resources that the county had expended in responding to incidents at the club. The Administrative Law Court granted the Motion and Richland County was heard on the matter. The club subsequently closed.
 21. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge? I believe that a judge should be courteous, professional, respectful and listen to all evidence prior to rendering a decision.
 22. 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? I believe that a judge's character, professionalism, and demeanor should be above reproach at all times in both business and personal dealings.

23. Do you feel that it is ever appropriate to be angry with a member of the public who would appear before you? Is anger ever appropriate in dealing with attorneys or a pro se litigant? I don't believe that public displays of anger are appropriate and I believe that a judge should maintain professional decorum at all times.
24. How much money have you spent on your campaign? \$35.93. If it is over \$100, has that amount been reported to the House and Senate Ethics Committees?
25. If you are a sitting judge, have you used judicial letterhead or the services of your staff while campaigning for this office? Not Applicable.
26. Have you sought or received the pledge of any legislator prior to this date? No.
27. Have you sought or been offered a conditional pledge of support by any legislator pending the outcome of your screening? No.
28. 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? No. Are you aware of any friends or colleagues contacting members of the General Assembly on your behalf? No.
29. Have you contacted any members of the Judicial Merit Selection Commission? No.
30. 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/ Latonya D. Edwards

Sworn to before me this 10th day of August, 2009.

Notary Public for S.C.

My Commission Expires: 10-04-2017