



**JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION
PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE**

Court, Position, and Seat # for which you are applying: Family Court, Fifth Judicial Circuit,
Seat 3

1. Name: The Honorable Michael Scott Rankin
Mrs.
Ms.

Name that you are known by if different from above
(Example: A Nickname): Scott Rankin

Are you currently serving in some capacity as a judge?
(Includes Municipal, Magistrate, Etc.)

Yes, part-time Magistrate, Kershaw County

Home Address: [REDACTED]

Business Address: 711 Lafayette Avenue, Camden South Carolina 29020

E-Mail Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone Number: (home): None.
(office): (803) 424-0026
(cell): [REDACTED]

2. Date of Birth: [REDACTED] 1965
Place of Birth: Wilson, North Carolina
Social Security Number: [REDACTED]
3. Are you a citizen of South Carolina? Yes.
Have you been a resident of this state for at least the immediate past five years? Yes.
4. SCDL# or SCHD#: SCDL# [REDACTED]
Voter Registration Number [REDACTED]
5. Have you served in the military? If so, give the dates, branch of service, highest rank attained, serial number (if applicable), present status, and the character of your discharge or release. Please provide a copy of your DD214 concerning your discharge. No.
6. Family Status: In the space below, (a) state whether you are single, married, widowed, divorced, or separated; (b) if married, state the date of your marriage and your spouse's full name; (c) if you have ever been divorced or are in the process of obtaining a divorce, state

the date, name of the moving party, court, and grounds; and (d) state the names of your children and their ages. If your children are old enough to work, include the occupation of each child.

Family Status: Married on November 3, 1990 to Charlotte Wallace
Never divorced, two children



7. List each college and law school you attended, including the dates of your attendance, the degrees you received, and if you left an institution without receiving a degree, the reason for your departure.
 - (a) University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, North Carolina 1984-1988, Bachelor of Arts in Radio, Television and Motion Pictures
 - (b) University of South Carolina - School of Law, Columbia, South Carolina, 1990-1993, Juris Doctor

8. List the significant activities in which you took part during your attendance at law school. Give the years you were involved in these activities and list any leadership positions you held.
 - (a) Vice-President of the Student Bar Association, 1992-1993
 - (b) Founder and President of Law School Republicans, 1992-1993
 - (c) National Trial Competition, 1992 and 1993

9. List the states in which you have been admitted to practice law and the year of each admission. Also list any states in which you took the bar exam but were never admitted to the practice of law. Please indicate the number of times you took the exam in each state.
 - (a) South Carolina, 1993 – I took the bar exam one (1) time

10. Describe chronologically, since graduation from law school, your legal experience. Please include a list of all positions held in which you worked in a legal capacity. Describe the general character of your practice and divide it into periods with dates if its character has changed over the years. Please also describe the extent to which you were involved with the administrative and financial management of each of these entities, including management of trust accounts.
 - (a) 1992 - 1993 Law Clerk; Jack Swerling, Criminal Defense
 - (b) 1993 - 1995 Associate; D. Kenneth Baker, P.A., General Practice
 - (c) 1995 - Present Law Office of M. Scott Rankin, now known as Rankin Law Firm, Solo practice firm practicing in the areas of Family Law, Family Court Mediations and Personal Injury

- (d) 1998 - 2001 Public Defender; Kershaw County (by contract)
- (e) 2006 - Present Part-time Magistrate, Kershaw County

11. Please answer the following:

- (a) If you are a candidate for Family Court, please provide a brief written description of your experience within each of the following Family Court practice areas: divorce and equitable division of property, child custody, adoption, abuse and neglect, and juvenile justice. Include information about cases you have handled in each of these practice areas, or if you have not practiced in an area, describe how your background and procedural knowledge has prepared you to preside over such matters as a Family Court Judge. Please also indicate the frequency of your appearances before a Family Court Judge within the past five years.

Divorce and Equitable Division of Property: I have had the opportunity to handle divorce actions involving a one-year uncontested divorce to highly contested actions involving grounds for divorce and division of significant assets. I have handled divorces involving all statutory grounds except for the ground of desertion. I have represented battered women and at times have represented a batterer. In those matters involving domestic abuse, I have filed for ex parte emergency relief and have attended domestic abuse hearings. I have handled divorces which have involved issues in Magistrate's Court, Probate Court, Bankruptcy Court and Social Security Disability.

Child Custody: A significant portion of my practice has involved child custody and other child-related issues. I have represented parents whose children range from infants to teens. I have represented a few parents of adult disabled children and special needs children. More recently, I have represented a significant number of grandparents seeking custody due to drug and/or alcohol abuse by the parents. In addition to dealing with drug and alcohol abuse, I have dealt with parental alienation, mental health issues, physical abuse and sexual abuse. Earlier in my practice, I did a significant amount of work as a guardian ad litem. In February of this year, I started taking guardian ad litem appointments.

Adoption: I have served as guardian ad litem and as counsel for a party, or parties, in private adoption cases involving termination of parental rights, both contested and uncontested. Some of my more memorable cases involved adoption and termination of parental rights. In one recent matter, I represented foster parents who sought to terminate the parental rights of the parents. The Department of Social Services was not cooperative initially in seeking to terminate the rights of the parents. The minor child had been placed with the foster parents when she was ten (10) days old. The TPR action was filed when the minor child was twenty (20) months old. The parental rights of the parents were ultimately terminated.

Abuse and Neglect: I have been both appointed and privately retained to represent parties in abuse and neglect cases. In those cases, I have dealt with custody and

termination of parental rights. I have represented parents who struggle with addiction and mental illness. I have represented parents who have physically and sexually abused their children. I have represented grandparents who have intervened to get their grandchildren out of foster care.

Juvenile Justice: From 1998-2001, I was Public Defender for Kershaw County. In that role, I represented countless parents/juveniles. As a result, I have been involved with DJJ, the solicitors, and other state agencies. I have attended hearings related to that action, including detention hearings, adjudication and sentencing hearings, and dispositional hearings. I have contacted various local and state agencies in an effort to obtain alternative treatment/placement for my clients. I have also attended hearings as a parent of a victim. That one incident provided me a different perspective in dealing with juvenile justice. Over the years, I have also counseled clients whose children have struggled with drug and alcohol abuse. I have assisted them in getting their children treatment including out-of-state placement. I have also helped clients whose children struggled with severe mental illness. Those experiences will assist me in dealing with juvenile justice matters as well as other matters involving children.

- (b) If you are a candidate for Circuit Court, please provide a brief written description of your experience in criminal matters, including any cases handled over the past five years and include a brief description of the issues involved. Further, please provide a brief written description of your experience in civil matters, including any cases handled over the past five years and include a brief description of the types of matters handled, issues involved, and procedural history. Please include information such as the primary areas in civil court in which you practice, whether you represent plaintiffs or defendants, or both. You may go back further than five years if you feel it would assist the Commission with its assessment of your experience. If you lack experience in an area, describe how your background and procedural knowledge has prepared you to preside over such matters as a Circuit Court Judge, or how you would compensate for your lack of experience in this area. Please also indicate the frequency of your appearances before a Circuit Court Judge within the past five years. N/A
- (c) If you are a candidate for Master-In-Equity, please provide a brief written description of your experience in the Master's court, including any cases handled over the past five years and include a brief description of the issues involved. Please include the frequency of your appearances before a Master-In-Equity or a Circuit Court Judge within the past five years. N/A
- (d) If you are a candidate for Administrative Law Court, please provide a brief written description of your experience before an Administrative Law Judge, including any issues discussed and the frequency of your appearances before the Administrative Law or Circuit Court within the past five years. N/A

12. What was the frequency of your court appearances during the past five years or in the five years prior to your election to the bench?
- (a) federal: None
 - (b) state: My appearance in state court varies, but on average, primarily with regard to my practice in Family Court, I appear weekly. There are weeks when I may not have any hearings and weeks where I may have four to five hearings scheduled.
13. What percentage of your practice involved civil, criminal, domestic, and other matters during the past five years or in the five years prior to your election to the bench?
- (a) civil: 30%
 - (b) criminal: 0%
 - (c) domestic: 70%
 - (d) other: 0%
14. What percentage of your practice in trial court during the past five years or in the five years prior to your election to the bench involved matters that went to a jury, including those that settled prior to trial?
- (a) jury: 2%
 - (b) non-jury: 98%

Did you most often serve as sole counsel, chief counsel, or associate counsel in these matters? Sole counsel

15. List five of the most significant litigated matters you have personally handled in either trial or appellate court or before a state or federal agency. Give citations if the cases were reported and describe why these matters were significant.

(a) Bower v. Bower

This was a divorce action in which I represented Wife. The parties had separated after five (5) of marriage. Wife had a Ph.D. in Economics and was the dean of a business school in Pennsylvania. Husband had a B.A. and at one time, held various licenses used by financial advisors to sell securities and insurance. At the time of the marriage, Husband was drawing unemployment benefits and earning income through his management of his stock portfolio. Husband did not re-enter the workforce during the marriage which was an issue with Wife. Husband managed the parties' investments and essentially acted as a day trader. He was a sophisticated investor and Wife, despite her education, was not. Further, he alleged he could not work due to various health issues. Husband had a vocational expert testify that he would be unable to return to the workforce. He was seeking permanent alimony and a 50/50 division of the marital assets. However, he took the position that some of his assets weren't marital. During the pendency of litigation, it was discovered that Husband had deliberately withheld information from Wife as it related to the management of her stock portfolio and retirement accounts. In fact, he had taken money from her non-marital accounts to cover some of his stock losses. After four (4) days of trial, the Court ruled in Wife's favor denying Husband alimony and granting Wife 54% of the marital estate. In addition, Wife was granted \$15,000 in

attorney fees which offset what she owed him through equitable division. This case was significant because we were able to establish that Husband was able to work despite his claims to the contrary and that several assets he claimed were non-marital had actually been transmuted.

(b) Wymer v. Ballentine and Stacey

This was a post-divorce custody action in which I represented Mother. Father was granted custody of the parties' minor son in the divorce. Approximately two (2) years later, Father was accused of physically abusing the minor child with said abuse being reported to DSS by his own father. DSS made a finding of physical abuse and Father fled to Texas with the minor child. Mother gained physical custody of the minor child six (6) months later. At that time, Mother had remarried. Mother maintained physical custody of the minor child for six (6) months when the minor child sustained 1st and 2nd degree burns as a result of taking a bath. Due to the burn incident, DSS and the Kershaw County Sheriff's Department became involved. The minor child was placed with Mother's parents. Mother's new husband was accused of holding the minor child in the hot water as some sort of punishment. The husband was never charged despite presentment to the Kershaw County Grand Jury. Further, DSS did not indicate a finding of physical abuse against Mother or her husband. Fifteen (15) months after the investigation by DSS, Mother's parents moved to Florida with the minor child. After much back and forth, Father eventually had a visit with the minor child who he had not seen in two (2) and one-half (1/2) years. Father then took the minor child back to Texas. His reasoning for taking the minor child was that Mother's husband had intentionally harmed him while taking a bath. The Court subsequently issued an Emergency Order requiring the minor child be brought back to South Carolina. Temporary custody was granted to Father's parents. After a forensic interview of the minor child, a supplemental temporary hearing was held and custody was changed to Mother's parents. At trial, Father's attorneys presented expert testimony that a standard temperature for a water heater is 120 degrees and the minor child would have been forced to stand in that water for five (5) to ten (10) minutes to sustain his injuries. We were able to establish that the water heater had been mistakenly set at 140 degrees which could cause the minor child's injuries with exposure of only one (1) second. Ultimately, Mother was granted custody of the minor child after six (6) days of trial. This matter took two (2) and one-half (1/2) years to resolve. This matter was significant because I believed my client was a good mother from beginning to end. Despite the multiple twists and turns, she prevailed. In addition, Father had a significant amount of financial resources and Mother was a stay-at-home mom. Further, Father was represented by two (2) very experienced Family Court practitioners.

(c) Pair v. Hardy, Bouknight, and DSS

My clients, who are Caucasian, were licensed foster parents to a mixed-race girl. They received her through a DSS action when she was approximately ten (10) days old. The minor child's mother used illegal drugs during her pregnancy with the minor child. The mother failed to comply with her treatment plan and eventually quit trying to see the minor child. The mother did not initially identify the father of the

minor child as he was in prison. However, once the father was released from prison, he attempted to become involved in the minor child's life. He was given a treatment plan which he did not complete. He would visit the minor child at DSS for a couple of months and then he would not show up for several months. The minor child did not know this man as her father and at times, the visits were very traumatic for her. DSS kept telling my clients that they were going to file a termination of parental rights action but they never did. We kept getting the run around and all the while, this little girl's life wasn't settled. Something had to give so I filed a TPR action on behalf of the foster parents. Eventually, DSS cooperated with us and we had a successful outcome for the minor child. The parents' rights were terminated and I have filed an action for adoption which is currently pending. The reason this action is significant is a personal one. The foster mother is unable to have children and the foster father is a, Army Veteran who was critically wounded in Iraq by an IED. If ever anyone needed a good outcome, it's this family.

(d) Campbell v. McCaskill

This case involved a post-divorce action for termination of parental rights and adoption by the step-father. Mother and Father initially shared joint custody of the two (2) minor children with Mother having primary placement pursuant to a custody agreement. One (1) year later, the parties divorced and they executed an addendum to their custody agreement allowing Mother to move to Atlanta, Georgia. The addendum also terminated Father's child support obligation. Mother married Stepfather fifteen (15) months later and they continued to reside in Atlanta with the minor children. Mother and Father subsequently executed a Child Custody Agreement one (1) year after Mother remarried wherein Mother would have sole custody of the minor children and Father would begin paying child support. I filed a complaint to have the agreement approved by the Court. Unfortunately, Father avoided service of process and stated he had changed his mind. We dismissed the complaint and filed the TPR/Adoption action two (2) months later. The grounds in the complaint alleged that Father's rights should be terminated as a result of his willful failure to visit the minor children during the six (6) months prior to the initiation of the action and as a result of his willful failure to support the minor children during the six (6) months prior to the filing of the action. Father contested the TPR and filed an answer and counterclaim seeking custody of the minor children. In addition, he filed an order and rule to show cause alleging Mother refused to allow him visitation. He even attempted, through counsel, to force visitation with the minor children during the pendency of the action. Fortunately, the Court didn't grant his request. At trial, I was confident in establishing that Father had not contributed materially during the prior six (6) months. Even though there was not an order requiring Father to pay support, I believed he still had a duty to support his children. I was more concerned over the visitation allegation. Father alleged Mother had prevented him from seeing the children and that he had kept them a little over six (6) months prior to filing the action. He also provided evidence that he had contacted Mother on numerous occasions during the six (6) months prior to our filing. After two (2) days of trial, the Court granted the TPR/Adoption on the basis Father willfully failed to visit and not on the support issue. While I was pleased with

the result, I was a little surprised by the Court's reasoning. It made me realize that there was more for me to learn and I believe it has made me a more thorough lawyer.

(e) State of South Carolina v. Lionel Williams

This was by far the most stressful case I have ever been associated with. I was the Public Defender for Kershaw County when I was appointed to represent Lionel Williams. Lionel had been charged with Armed Robbery and Kidnapping and he had signed a written confession admitting his guilt. The Solicitor offered Lionel twelve (12) years if he would plead guilty. Lionel maintained his innocence from the first day I met him stating that he was forced to sign the confession after hours of interrogation. In addition, the timeline didn't add up as he was in the Kershaw County jail a few hours before the crime took place. Lionel had been in jail for shoplifting a case of beer. When he was released, the prosecution's theory was that he left the jail on foot, obtained a gun and bandana, walked three (3) miles and robbed a man. All would have occurred within ninety (90) minutes of his release. It was illogical that he could pull that off in such a short period of time. But, they had a confession. I was very concerned he would be found guilty and spend a significant time in prison if we went to trial. A couple of months before trial, I met Lionel's brother, his twin brother. Once I met his brother, I knew Lionel was innocent. I actually had an innocent client and it terrified me. What if I failed him? Fortunately, I didn't worry about that too long as I had to focus on making sure Lionel wasn't wrongfully convicted. Given the obvious similarities between Lionel and his brother, I focused on the witness identification. Another lawyer referred me to an expert on witness identification and I was able to convince the Court to approve funding for my expert from Florida State University. The expert explained the process of false identifications especially when it involves different races. After short deliberation, Lionel was found not guilty on both charges. That case was significant in that I learned it is vitally important to really listen to your client and not just look at the facts. Sometimes, you learn more by listening. By listening and trusting Lionel, I believe I was able to save his life.

16. List up to five civil appeals you have personally handled. Give the case name, the court, the date of decision, and the citation if the case was reported.

When I worked as an associate for D. Kenneth Baker, I assisted in writing briefs for several appeals. I have not handled any appeals since starting my own practice in May 1995.

17. List up to five criminal appeals you have personally handled. Give the case name, the court, the date of decision and the citation if the case was reported. None

18. Have you ever held judicial office? If so, list the periods of your service, the courts involved, and whether you were elected or appointed. Describe the jurisdiction of each of the courts and note any limitations on the jurisdiction of each court.

(a) Part-time Magistrate, Kershaw County. Appointed. Presently I handle the civil cases for Kershaw County and I set bond one (1) week per month.

19. If the answer to question 18 is yes, describe or list five of your most significant orders or opinions and give the citations if they were reported.

Unfortunately, I do not have any significant orders or opinions since becoming Magistrate in 2006.

20. List all courts in which you have been admitted to practice and list the dates of your admission. Give the same information for administrative bodies that require a special admission to practice.

(a) Federal District Court, January 31, 1994

(b) SC Supreme Court, November 1993

21. Have you taught law-related courses or lectured at bar association conferences, educational institutions, or continuing legal or judicial education programs? If so, briefly describe each course or lecture. No.

22. Provide, as a separate attachment, your continuing legal or judicial education report from the past five years.

See attached.

23. List all published books and articles you have written and give citations and the dates of publication for each. None.

24. Please furnish as a separate attachment, two examples of legal articles, briefs, orders, or other legal writings for which you can claim sole or primary authorship. If you cannot claim sole authorship, please explain the extent to which you are the primary author, to include a description of the other authors and their contributions. The writing samples are for the Commission's use only and will not be published. (If you are a judge and are not seeking a different type of judgeship, this question is inapplicable.)

Please see attached. Both writing samples are orders I authored after receiving memorandums from the Court.

25. What is your rating or membership status, if any, by any legal rating organization, such as, Best Lawyers, Chambers, Legal 500, Martindale-Hubbell, Who's Who Legal, Super Lawyers, Million Dollar Advocates Forum, etc.? If you are currently a member of the judiciary, list your last available rating, if any.

To my knowledge, my rating with Martindale-Hubbell is BV. I am not a member of any legal rating organization.

26. List all bar associations and professional organizations of which you are a member and give the titles and dates of any offices you have held in such groups.
(a) Kershaw County Bar Association - President; 1995-1997
(b) South Carolina Bar Association - Member 1993 - Present

27. Have you ever held public office other than judicial office? If so, list the periods of your service, the office or offices involved, and whether you were elected or appointed. Also, state whether or not you have timely filed your report with the State Ethics Commission during the period you held public office. If not, were you ever subject to a penalty? If so, give details, including dates. No.

28. For sitting or former judges, list all employment you had while serving as a judge (whether full-time or part-time, contractual or at will, consulting or otherwise) other than elected judicial office. Specify your dates of employment, employer, major job responsibilities, and supervisor.

I am currently a part-time Magistrate for Kershaw County and have been since 2006. During that time, I have maintained my private law practice.

29. Have you ever been an unsuccessful candidate for elective, judicial, or other public office? If so, give details, including dates. No.

30. Have you ever been engaged in any occupation, business, or profession other than the practice of law, teaching of law, or holding judicial or other public office? If so, give details, including a description of your occupation, business, or profession, the dates of your employment, and the name of your business or employer.

My wife and I are co-owners of a couple of Limited Liability Companies (LLC) which own a number of rental properties including my law office. We began purchasing said properties in 1997. The properties are owned by Hunt Park, LLC and H & H Trading, LLC). I am also a member of two (2) other LLC's (Camden Properties, LLC and Double Bogey Partners, LLC). Each LLC owns investment/rental property. My wife manages all of our property investments.

31. Are you now an officer or director or involved in the management of any business enterprise? Explain the nature of the business, your duties, and the term of your service.

I am President of King Haigler Homeowners Association. This relates to my membership in Camden Properties. King Haigler is a 30-unit townhouse/apartment complex of which, Camden Properties own 23 units. I have been President since our purchase of the properties in 2003.

32. Are you now or have you ever been employed as a "lobbyist," as defined by S.C. Code § 2-17-10(13), or have you acted in the capacity of a "lobbyist's principal," as defined by S.C. Code § 2-17-10(14)? If so, give the dates of your employment or activity in such capacity and specify by whom you were directed or employed. No.

33. Provide, as a separate attachment, a complete, current financial net worth statement that itemizes in detail:
- (a) the identity and value of all financial assets held, directly or indirectly, including, but not limited to, bank accounts, real estate, securities, trusts, investments, and other financial holdings; and
 - (b) the identity and amount of each liability owed, directly or indirectly, which is in excess of \$1,000, including, but not limited to, debts, mortgages, loans, and other financial obligations.

(A net worth statement form is provided with this questionnaire and you must use this format for submission of your financial statement.)

A complete, current financial net worth statement was provided to the Commission.

NOTE: The Commission may require written confirmation that financial obligations have been satisfied or that the parties have agreed upon a payment schedule.

34. Has a tax lien or other collection procedure ever been instituted against you by federal, state, or local authorities? Have you ever defaulted on a student loan? Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? If so, give details.
No.
35. Since filing with the Commission your letter of intent to run for judicial office, have you accepted lodging, transportation, entertainment, food, meals, beverages, money, or any other thing of value as defined by S.C. Code § 2-17-10(1) from a lobbyist or lobbyist's principal? If so, please specify the item or items you received, the date of receipt, and the lobbyist or lobbyist's principal involved.
No.
36. Itemize (by amount, type, and date) all expenditures, other than those for travel and room and board, made by you, or on your behalf in furtherance of your candidacy for the position you seek. If you have spent over \$100, have you reported your expenditures to the House and Senate Ethics Committees?
At this time, the only expenditures I have are postage for the letters mailed as required under this application. I anticipate additional expenditures of letters of introduction, postage and name tag. Those expenditures will be disclosed if they are incurred.
37. List the recipient and amount of all contributions made by you, a member of your immediate family, or by a business with whom you are associated, to members of the General Assembly within the past four years.
None.

38. Have you or has anyone acting on your behalf solicited or collected funds to aid in the promotion of your candidacy? If so, please specify the amount, solicitor, donor, and date of the solicitation.

No.

39. Describe any financial arrangements or business relationships you have, or have had in the past, that could constitute or result in a possible conflict of interest in the position you seek or currently hold. Explain how you would resolve any potential conflict of interest.

None.

40. Describe any interest you or a member of your immediate family has in real property:

(a) in which there is a potential conflict of interest with your involvement in a South Carolina state or local public agency;

(b) in which there have been public improvements of \$200 or that adjoins property in which there have been public improvements of \$200; or

(c) which was sold, leased, or rented to a state or local public agency in South Carolina.

None.

List the interest you hold and the value and location of the property. Identify as applicable the:

(a) nature of any potential conflict of interest;

(b) nature and value of any public improvements; and

(c) South Carolina state or local public agency which purchased or is leasing or renting such property.

Attach a copy of any contract or agreement.

N/A

41. Identify any personal property interest you or a member of your immediate family sold, leased, or rented to a South Carolina state or local public agency. Identify the property, its amount or value, and the name of the agency. Attach a copy of any contract or agreement.

None.

42. For sitting judges, if you currently hold an interest in stock or other securities or have held such an interest, list each stock you currently own or owned during the prior calendar year. If you prefer, you may attach broker or account records containing the requested information instead of listing it here.

I'm enclosing a statement from Wells Fargo Financial Partners.

43. For sitting judges, have you ever accepted anything of value from an attorney or litigant in a matter currently or previously before you or your court? If so, please give the details, including the name of the attorney or litigant and the thing of value you received.

No.

44. For sitting judges, have you used the services of your staff, for which you did not pay, while campaigning for this office?

No.

45. Have you ever been arrested, charged, or held by federal, state, or other law enforcement authorities for violation or for suspicion of violation of any federal law or regulation, state law or regulation, or county or municipal law, regulation, or ordinance, or any other law, including another country's law? If so, give details but do not include traffic violations which are subject to a penalty of \$125 or less. You must include any and all arrests, including, but not limited to, offenses for driving under the influence or similar traffic offenses. Include all arrests that resulted in expungement, which will be redacted. If you have questions regarding whether to include an offense, please contact the Commission.

[All answers have been received and considered by the Commission, and as noted above, any expunged matters are redacted from the record.]

46. Have you, to your knowledge, ever been under federal, state, or local investigation for possible violation of a criminal statute? If yes, explain.

No.

47. Have you ever been sued by a client? Have you ever been a named party (personally or professionally) in or had a pecuniary interest in any civil or criminal proceedings? If so, give details, including, but not limited to, dates, and resolutions.

Yes.

(a) In 2006, I was sued by Tom Grecheski d/b/a Ski Construction. Mr. Grecheski alleged that I didn't fully compensate him for work he performed in renovating my home. I had previously terminated Mr. Grecheski from doing any further work when I caught one of his employees smoking marijuana at my home. He then filed suit. The matter was heard in front of the Honorable Thomas E. Davis and was dismissed with prejudice.

(b) I, along with ten (10) other Plaintiffs filed an action against Cancun Enterprises, LLC et al, alleging fraud in connection with an investment in a restaurant/nightclub located in Cancun, Mexico. I asked to be dismissed as a Plaintiff shortly after the death of my father. The remaining Plaintiffs reached a financial settlement with one (1) of the Defendants and the action was dismissed with prejudice in 2016.

(c) I filed an action against Bruce Knigge in 2011 in connection with a promissory note he had signed. I had represented Mr. Knigge's daughter in a contested custody matter and shortly before trial, his daughter could no longer pay for my services. Mr. Knigge signed a promissory note guaranteeing payment. After six (6) days of trial, we were successful in his daughter gaining custody of the minor child. Mr. Knigge made a few payments after the trial but ultimately stopping paying. Given the significant amount of fees owed, I pursued an action against him. On January 22, 2013, the Honorable Alison Renee Lee granted me judgment in the amount of \$23,750.05.

48. If you are in private practice, are you covered by malpractice insurance and, if so, how long have you carried malpractice insurance? If applicable, have you ever been covered by a tail policy? If so, please explain when you were covered by a tail policy. Also, if applicable, indicate your coverage and deductible for your current malpractice policy.

Yes. I have been covered by malpractice insurance since I began my private practice in May 1995. Prior to that, I was covered through my employment with D. Kenneth Baker, P.A.

\$500,000 Each Claim

\$1,000,000 Policy Aggregate.

Deductible: \$2,500 Each Claim

I have never been covered by a tail policy

49. Have you ever, in South Carolina or any other jurisdiction, as a lawyer, judge, or other professional, been sanctioned or disciplined for lawyer, judicial, or other professional misconduct or has any jurisdiction found that you committed any misconduct? If so, give the details and describe any final disposition. Include any and all confidential and public sanction, discipline, or finding of misconduct of any kind.

[Yes and no responses are redacted for all candidates unless there is a public discipline.]

50. Have you ever been investigated by the Department of Social Services? If so, give the details and the resolution. Has your name ever been enrolled on the Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect? If so, give the details.
No.

51. Have you directly or indirectly requested the pledge of any member of the General Assembly as to your election for the position for which you are being screened or have you been offered a conditional pledge of support by any legislator pending the outcome of your screening? Have you received the assurance of any public official or public employee that they will seek the pledge of any member of the General Assembly as to your election for the position for which you are being screened? If so, give details.
No.

52. Have you requested any third parties to contact members of the General Assembly on your behalf before the final and formal screening report has been released? Describe the campaigning you have done for this election and include a list of those individuals you have asked to campaign on your behalf and, to the best of your knowledge, those who have campaigned for you on their own initiative.
No.

53. Are you familiar with the 48-hour rule, which prohibits a candidate from seeking pledges until after the draft report becomes final, which occurs on the day and time specified on the Commission's published screening schedule?
Yes.

54. Since submitting your letter of intent to become a candidate, have you or has anyone acting on your behalf contacted any member of the Judicial Merit Selection Commission about your candidacy or intention to become a candidate? If so, give details.
No.

55. List the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of five (5) persons from whom you are providing references. Also, provide the Commission with **original letters** of recommendation from each person listed herein, including their signature (preferably in blue ink). **The Commission will not accept a photocopy or electronic submission of a letter of recommendation and failure to include all five (5) original letters of recommendation in your packet when you submit it will render your packet incomplete.** Please **do not** have references mail your reference letters to the Commission directly. *You must return the five (5) original letters of recommendation to the Commission with your application packet.*

- (a) William H. Burriss, Esquire
Burriss and Ridgeway
901 Elmwood Avenue
Columbia, South Carolina 29201
(803) 451-4000
- (b) Angela M. Kirby, Esquire
Kirby Law, LLC
828 Woodrow Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29205
(803) 256-6401
- (c) Timothy Hudson, Senior Vice-President
First Palmetto Bank
PO Box 430
Camden, South Carolina 20201
(803)424-5014
- (d) Donnie Wilson, Chief Financial Officer
Kershaw County School District
2029 West DeKalb Street
Camden, South Carolina 29020
(803) 432-8416
- (e) Roy M. Fakoury, CFP®, CAP®
Managing Principal
Wells Fargo Advisors Financial Network – Camden Financial Partners, LLC
1034 Broad Street
Camden, SC 29020
803-272-0700

56. Are you active on or a member of a social media or Internet site or have you, to your knowledge, been featured or depicted on a social media or Internet site, such as, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.? If so, how would your use of social media or other similar types of Internet sites be affected if you were serving in a judicial capacity?

Yes. I currently am an active member of Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. I also have an internet website for my business. I rarely post on any of the sites. I use Facebook to stay in touch with friends and family. I use Instagram to stay in touch with my children, relative and friends. I use Twitter primarily to keep up with sports. Rankin Law Firm has an

informational website relative to my law practice. I do not feel that any of the social media sites would be affected if I were serving in a judicial capacity. However, I would be willing to delete all social media accounts if necessary. If I am fortunate to be elected, I would discontinue my law practice website once I took the bench.

57. List all civic, charitable, educational, social, and fraternal organizations of which you are or have been a member during the past five years and include any offices held in such a group, any professional honors, awards, or other forms of recognition received and not listed elsewhere.
- (a) Camden Country Club – Board of Directors President 2017-2018, Vice-President 2016-2017 and currently Past President
 - (b) Fine Arts Center of Camden - Board Member 2010-2013
 - (c) School Improvement Council, President - Camden High School, Kershaw County School District – 2015-2017
 - (d) Lyttleton Street United Methodist Church, Camden, South Carolina - Nominating Committee 2013-2016
58. Provide any other information that may reflect positively or negatively on your candidacy, or which you believe should be disclosed in connection with consideration of you for nomination for the position you seek. This information may include how your life experiences have affected or influenced the kind or type of judge you have been or plan to be.

When I was 12 years old, I was a voracious reader. I would read anything I could get my hands on. It didn't matter whether it was Sports Illustrated, The Hardy Boys, or even World Book Encyclopedia, I read it. It was during this period that I discovered F. Lee Bailey. I became fascinated with his life as a Criminal Defense lawyer and specifically, his defense of Sam Sheppard. It was amazing how he successfully got a not-guilty verdict after Sheppard had previously been convicted of murdering his wife. I read The Defense Never Rests and For the Defense. After reading those books, as well as a few others, I was determined to become a criminal lawyer. I wanted to get justice for my clients. I knew that was my calling. Fast forward fifteen (15) years and I graduate from the University of South Carolina School of Law. At that time, I had no idea what kind of practice I wanted. Fortunately, Ken Baker hired me in December 1993 and he allowed me to handle a variety of matters. That is when I had my first experience with Family Court. I realized then that I enjoyed helping people solve their domestic problems. I believe part of that was due to the fact that my parents had divorced about a year earlier and their divorce wasn't amicable. I wanted to fix things that I couldn't with my parents.

Even today, I try to "fix" things that I can't control. I have learned over the years practicing in Family Court, that I will not always get a favorable result for a client. However, that doesn't make it any easier. It bothers me when I see a client hurting after a hearing and I wonder what I could have done differently. Some may see that as a weakness but I see it as a strength. It's a strength because it demonstrates how much I care. Over the past twenty-five (25) years, I have fought hard for reasonableness and fairness. As a Family Court Judge, I intend to do the same.

In addition, I recently had the experience of running into a former juvenile client. Samantha (name changed to protect her identity) was an assistant manager at a restaurant and she saw me walk through the door. After I was seated, she made her way over to our table. While I recognized her face, I couldn't place her name or how I knew her. She then told me her name and I immediately knew. Samantha was a troubled teen who had no respect for authority and she was essentially kicked out of her home by her parents. She ended up committing various crimes and spent some time at DJJ. I was appointed to represent her. This was approximately twenty (20) years ago. Samantha told me that she had turned her life around and had two (2) children of her own. She said she was doing well and even had a good relationship with her parents. She then said "thank you." I was taken aback and asked her why. She stated that throughout her troubles, I was the one who stood by her and didn't abandon her. Needless to say, I was floored. I didn't realize what kind of an impact I could have on someone. It's those moments which make me realize what an even bigger impact I can have as a judge. While I know I can't save every troubled teen, I can try to save as many as possible.

YOUR SIGNATURE WILL BE HELD TO CONSTITUTE A WAIVER OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF ANY PROCEEDING BEFORE A GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE OR ANY INFORMATION CONCERNING YOUR CREDIT.

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

Signature: _____

Sworn to before me this ____ day of _____, 2018.

(Notary Signature)

(Notary Printed Name)
Notary Public for South Carolina
My Commission Expires: _____