



## ALLEGHENY COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

*Serving the Pittsburgh Legal Community*

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### NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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## ACBA Can Help Voters Make Informed Voting Decisions with Judicial Candidate and Retention Election Ratings

**PITTSBURGH** – Election Day is Nov. 4, and many Allegheny County residents will receive mail-in ballots prior to that date. With numerous judicial races on the ballot, the Allegheny County Bar Association aims to help members of the community make informed decisions when casting their votes.

Thirteen candidates are seeking to be elected to the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas, which currently has eight vacancies. The ACBA Judiciary Committee has evaluated and rated all 13 candidates.

Additionally, seven Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas judges, along with two Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justices and one Pa. Commonwealth Court Judge from Allegheny County – whose 10-year terms are expiring – are seeking to be re-elected for additional 10-year terms. They are running unopposed in a “yes” or “no” referendum, asking voters if each judge should be retained. The attorneys of the ACBA were surveyed and strongly recommend all 10 of these judges be retained.

“As a bar association, one of our core functions is to serve the public by providing judicial candidate and retention candidate ratings,” said ACBA President Amy Coco. “We understand that many members of the public are not in a position to know which judges have performed well on the bench, or if a given candidate would make a good judge. The attorneys who practice in front of these judges and those on our Judiciary Committee have added insight into these candidates. That’s why the ACBA evaluates these candidates and sitting judges, so that Allegheny County voters can make informed voting decisions.”

Ratings for both the judicial election and the retention election are below. For additional information on the candidates and judicial elections, visit [www.JudicialVote2025.org](http://www.JudicialVote2025.org).

### **Retention Election Ratings**

ACBA membership has recommended residents vote “YES” to retain the seven Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas judges running for retention in the Nov. 4 municipal election, as well as the Allegheny County judges running for retention on the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and the Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court. (Possible retention ratings are “Recommended” or “Not Recommended”). The judges are:

#### **Pennsylvania Supreme Court**

- The Hon. **Christine Donohue** Recommended
- The Hon. **David Wecht** Recommended

**-more-**

**Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court**

- The Hon. **Michael H. Wojcik** Recommended

**Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas**

- The Hon. **Edward J. Borkowski** Recommended
- The Hon. **Alan D. Hertzberg** Recommended
- The Hon. **Beth A. Lazzara** Recommended
- The Hon. **Jennifer Staley McCrady** Recommended
- The Hon. **Hugh F. McGough** Recommended
- The Hon. **Dan Regan** Recommended
- The Hon. **Dwayne D. Woodruff** Recommended

**Judicial Candidate Ratings**

The ACBA Judiciary Committee has rated 13 individuals running for the eight vacancies on the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas. Possible ratings are “Highly Recommended,” “Recommended” and “Not Recommended). The candidates are:

**Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas**

- **The Hon. Simquita Bridges** Highly Recommended
- **Julie Capone** Highly Recommended
- **The Hon. Alyssa B. Cowan** Highly Recommended
- **Anthony DeLuca** Highly Recommended
- **Daniel L. Miller** Highly Recommended
- **Bryan Neft** Highly Recommended

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|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| • Jacquelyn Ann Obara            | Highly Recommended |
| • The Hon. Michele Santicola     | Highly Recommended |
| • Jamie Marie Hickton            | Recommended        |
| • The Hon. Matthew V. Rudzki     | Recommended        |
| • Heather Lynn Schmidt Bresnahan | Recommended        |
| • Amanda Green Hawkins           | Not Recommended    |
| • Sarra Terry                    | Not Recommended    |

### About ACBA Retention Election Ratings

ACBA Retention Election Ratings cover those judges on the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas, as well as judges from the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, Superior Court of Pennsylvania, Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania and with a primary office in Allegheny County, whose terms are expiring. These judges are seeking to be retained for another 10-year term and run unopposed. Voters are asked to vote “yes” or “no” regarding whether each judge should be retained.

All ACBA members – including many attorneys who practice before these judges – are surveyed and asked if each judge should be retained. Each retention candidate is then given a “Recommended” or “Not Recommended” rating based on the results of this survey.

### About ACBA Judicial Candidate Ratings

ACBA Judicial Ratings cover those candidates seeking seats on the bench of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, Superior Court of Pennsylvania, Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania and the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas.

The ACBA Judiciary Committee is required by ACBA By-Laws to interview and evaluate all candidates seeking appointment to/or running for a seat on the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas. Candidates who do not submit applications for interviews and evaluations for the Court of Common Pleas receive a rating of “Not Recommended.” The Judiciary Committee may interview and evaluate Pa. Appellate Court candidates who have their principal offices in Allegheny County or reside in Allegheny County, at the request of that candidate. The ACBA Board of Governors reviews the ratings of candidates prepared by the Judiciary Committee. The ratings are published when authorized by the Board of Governors.

### Explanation of Ratings:

#### Highly Recommended

The candidate:

- A. Exhibits pre-eminence in the law by way of outstanding legal ability and a wide range of experience, either in a specialized field of law or a more varied practice and has a reputation in the legal community as standing at the top of his or her profession.

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B. Possesses a reputation for the utmost integrity and temperament to excel as a judge of the court for which he/she is a candidate.

C. Exhibits outstanding citizenship by way of community and professional contributions.

D. Is an exceptional individual who will enhance or has enhanced the competence, dignity and public perception of the bench.

### **Recommended**

The candidate possesses a reputation for the utmost integrity and the legal ability, experience, and temperament to excel as a judge of the court for which he or she is a candidate.

### **Not Recommended**

At the time of the Committee's evaluation process, the candidate has not demonstrated to the Committee that the candidate possesses the legal ability, character, reputation, experience or temperament for a judicial position.

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### **About the ACBA**

*Chartered in 1870 and headquartered in downtown Pittsburgh, the Allegheny County Bar Association is a professional organization with more than 5,000 member attorneys, judges, district justices, legal administrators, and paralegals.*