

June 7, 2006 Press Release -- Additional OJARP Panel

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Strickland Appoints Additional Judicial Panel Members to Assist in Selection of Ohio Judges

Columbus, Ohio – Governor Ted Strickland today provided some relief to the hard-working volunteers serving as at-large members of his Ohio Judicial Appointments Recommendations Panel (OJARP) – he appointed a second group of at-large members to share the workload with the first.

“I have been pleased with the commitment and work of the local and the at-large OJARP panel members. They have devoted substantial volunteer time and energy to help select the most qualified individuals to serve as judges in Ohio courts,” Strickland said. “The time we’re asking these people to commit to this process is significant and with more judicial vacancies announced each month, we decided it was time to establish a second group of at-large panel members.”

Each time there is a judicial vacancy, the five at-large panel members from across the state are joined by six local panel members to form a group of eleven citizens who review applications and interview applicants before providing their top three recommendations to the governor. By having a second group of at-large panel members, the vacancies can be alternately assigned to one of the two at-large groups, reducing the burden on the original at-large panel members. The first vacancy utilizing the new at-large panel members will be the Stark County Court of Common Pleas vacancy announced April 12 by OJARP.

The governor also indicated that having two groups of at-large panel members will allow members of one group to fill in for members of the other group when an at-large member can not participate in the process with respect to a specific vacancy due to illness, emergency or conflict concerns.

All at-large panel members are appointed by the governor for renewable two-year terms. The governor designates one member as the panel chair, who leads the panel’s operations to fill each vacancy. Panel members, who serve without compensation, include lawyers and non-lawyers and reflect Ohio’s diverse citizenry.

As a judicial vacancy occurs, the panel dealing with the vacancy provides notice and wide distribution of the open post, including a posting on the governor’s Web site. OJARP is also developing its own Web site for the posting of vacancy information. Any Ohio attorney who meets the legal requirements for judicial appointment is eligible to apply for consideration.

The governor has instructed the panels to consider all factors in reviewing and selecting the potential appointees, but, in particular, the panels evaluate: the applicant’s background and ability to serve fairly and effectively; the applicant’s contribution to bringing diverse perspectives to Ohio’s judiciary; and the likelihood that the applicant could and would effectively campaign to retain the seat if appointed to the bench.

**New At-Large Members of the Ohio Judicial Appointments Recommendations Panel,
Term Commencing June 6, 2007**

James Ray, Chair

Ray, of Lucas County, served as the administrative judge of the Lucas County Court of Common Pleas, Juvenile Division, in Toledo from 1989 until retiring in March 2007. He previously served as a referee in the court from 1976-1988 and as the chief referee from 1987-1988. Ray also served in private practice and as a Lutheran Parish Pastor for 10 years. Ray received his bachelor’s degree from Saint Olaf College, his master’s in divinity from Luther Theological Seminary in Minnesota, and his law degree from the University of Toledo. Ray is a past president of the Ohio Association of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and is vice-chairman of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council in Lucas County.

Janica Pierce, Member

Pierce, of Franklin County, is an associate in the law firm of Chester Willcox and Saxbe LLP, with a concentration in the areas of civil trial and appellate litigation. She received her bachelor’s degree from the University of

Tennessee in 1999 and her law degree from Ohio State University in 2002. Pierce received the Franklin County Trial Lawyers Association President's Award in 2005 and was listed as an "Ohio Rising Star" in 2005 and 2006 by *Law & Politics*. She is a member of the Ohio State Bar and Columbus Bar Associations, the Ohio Academy of Trial Lawyers Association and the Association of Trial Lawyers of America.

John Kulewicz, Member

Kulewicz, of Franklin County, is a partner in the law firm of Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease LLP. Kulewicz has more than 20 years of litigation experience with an emphasis on corporate and commercial matters. His experience includes involvement in client representation on litigation matters involving contract disputes, business torts, real estate, transfer of corporate ownership and control, oil and gas and financial institutions and securities. Kulewicz received his undergraduate degree from the Ohio State University in 1976 and his law degree from Yale Law School in 1979. He is a member of the Columbus, Ohio State and American Bar Associations.

Betty Davis, Member

Davis, of Warren County, served more than 20 years as a Mason city councilmember, including two years as mayor and 12 years as vice mayor. Davis received a bachelor's degree from the University of Cincinnati and a law degree from Salmon P. Chase College of Law at Northern Kentucky University. Davis, who is a licensed nursing home administrator, has served in private law practice and worked extensively to provide services for the mentally handicapped, developmentally disabled and geriatric population. She is currently the president for Community Concepts, Inc., and Community Options, Inc., in Mason.

Isabel Frammer, Member

Framer, of Summit County, is a court certified Spanish/English interpreter, translator and consultant; she has worked as an interpreter and translator in the Akron area since 1995. Frammer has served the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio, state and municipal courts, the Federal Defender's Office, the U.S. Attorney's Office, private law firms and legal advocacy firms. Frammer currently serves on the Supreme Court of Ohio's Advisory Committee on Interpreter Services and is the chair of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators. Frammer was born in Guayaquil, Ecuador, and grew up in the United States.

Original At-Large Members of the Ohio Judicial Appointments Recommendations Panel, Term Commencing January 29, 2007:

Janet E. Jackson, Chair, President and CEO of United Way of Central Ohio

Meg Flack, Board Member of the Ohio League of Women Voters

Doloris Learmonth, Managing partner at Peck Shaffer and Williams LLP in Cincinnati

Joy Malek Oldfield, Partner at Hill Hardman Oldfield, LLC, in Akron

Charles "Rocky" Saxbe, Former state representative, currently a senior partner in the Columbus law firm of Chester, Wilcox and Saxbe, LLP