



COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL NOMINEES EVALUATION

THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA

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DATE: June 14, 2007

TO: Board of Governors of the State Bar of California

FROM: Andrew E. Sweet, Past Chair, Commission on Judicial Nominees Evaluation

SUBJECT: Commission on Judicial Nominees Evaluation Activities and Statistical Report for 2006

I am pleased to submit the 2006 Activities and Statistical Report of the Commission on Judicial Nominees Evaluation. The Report provides comprehensive information about the Commission's extensive work during 2006. Data for prior years (2004-2005) is included in the attachments to provide a broader perspective on the Commission's work. After 2005, where the Commission faced an unprecedented number of evaluations and meeting days, 2006 returned the Commission to a more historically typical year. The Commission as a whole performed its duties with objectivity, skill and unmatched professionalism.

In 2006, the Commission evaluated a total of 226 candidates and the Governor made 78 appointments. The candidates were selected from a diverse cross section of counties throughout the state. The total number of assignments for each commissioner was 13, which was consistent with years prior to 2005 (13 in 2002, 12 in 2003, and 14 in 2004).

Based on the JNE ratings for candidates appointed in 2006, 53 percent of the Governor's appointments were rated "well qualified." No appointments were made of candidates who received a "not qualified" rating. The Governor's "exceptionally well qualified" appointments represented 14 percent of the total number of appointments. The remaining appointments, or 33 percent of those made during 2006, were rated "qualified," which represents an atypically high percentage of appointments of judicial officers rated in the "qualified" category.

While the impressive volunteer dedication of each commissioner is well known and obvious from the mere volume of evaluations performed, a less obvious, but no less valuable contribution to the Commission is not reflected in the statistical analysis. The Commission director, Billie Sivanov and her staff are its most remarkable asset. Billie provides an unparalleled dedication to the Commission. Her efforts result in efficient management, consistency and the promulgation of fair

BILJANNA SIVANOV
Director

implementation of the Commission's mandate. In 2006, Billie was an invaluable advisor and an incredible source of institutional knowledge to the great benefit of the Chair.

In addition, the Commission could not function without the dedicated professionals and key public members who serve as commissioners. The commissioners take seriously their duty to "assist the Governor in the judicial selection process and thereby by to promote a California judiciary of quality and integrity by providing independent, comprehensive, accurate, and fair evaluations of candidates for judicial appointment and nomination." (Rules and Procedures of the Commission on Judicial Nominees Evaluation (2006) Mission Statement, p.1). During my service as Chair, I had the pleasure to work with commissioners I consider to be some of the brightest and most talented people in our state. My colleagues worked tirelessly in order to produce candidate evaluations that were conducted in a fair and comprehensive manner. I was particularly struck by the commission's dedication to excellence and fairness. I am extremely proud to have served as Chair of this incredible group.

It has been a great privilege to serve as the Commission's Chair from March of 2006 until March of this year. I hope the Board finds the Report informative. I urge you to continue your excellent record and dedication to appointing quality commissioners in the future. Finally, the Commission's contribution to the California judiciary and the community respect it has achieved as part of the State Bar of California is a tribute to the successful relationship that the Commission has with the Board. I also urge you to continue your vital support of the Commission.

Attachments