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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JUSTICE GARMAN ANNOUNCES FORMATION OF JUDICIAL SCREENING COMMITTEE

Illinois Supreme Court Justice Rita B. Garman announced Friday the members of a seven-person evaluation committee to help in filling a judicial vacancy in the Fifth Judicial Circuit.

Justice Garman established the screening committee to help assess the qualifications of those persons who have applied for appointment to the office of Judge of the Circuit Court for the Fifth Judicial Circuit to replace Judge Paul C. Komada who retired September 30, 2001.

After the committee has received public input, gathered information, and interviewed each of the applicants, it will report its findings to Justice Garman who will make a recommendation to the Illinois Supreme Court. The Court will make the appointment.

The person appointed will serve as a judge of the circuit court by appointment until the general election to be held in November, 2002.

The screening committee consists of persons who reside in the Fifth Judicial Circuit. Four of the committee members are non-lawyers and three are lawyers.

The non-lawyer members of the committee include: Gary Melvin, president and owner of Rural King in Mattoon; Vicki Kirkpatrick, Coles County Circuit Clerk; Mary Ann Tucker, community leader in Paris; and Joe Baptist, president of The Bank in Charleston.

The lawyer members of the committee include attorneys Ralph Glenn of Mattoon; Kristen Crouse Bays of Charleston; and Charles Hall of Danville.

Joe Baptist will serve as chairperson of the committee.

Those who have submitted applications and are to be considered for appointment to the judgeship, and will be screened by the committee, are: Steve Ryan, Mitchell Shick and David Wesner. All of the applicants are lawyers who reside in the Fifth Judicial Circuit.

MORE

Members of the public are invited to submit comments concerning the applicants by writing to Joe Baptist, Chairperson, Fifth Circuit Judicial Screening Committee, P.O. Box 530, Charleston, Illinois 61920. Comments should be received by the committee before November 12, 2001. All comments will be held in the strictest confidence by the committee and the Court.

The Fifth Judicial Circuit includes Coles, Cumberland, Clark, Edgar and Vermilion Counties.