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ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT RETURNS TOBIAS BARRY TO APPELLATE BENCH

The Supreme Court of Illinois announced on Monday the appointment of Tobias G. Barry, a longtime public servant, to the Illinois Appellate Court for the 3rd Judicial District.

Justice Barry, who has celebrated a half century in the law, will return to the same bench where he served for 20 years and was presiding justice for several terms.

He was named to fill the vacancy of retiring Thomas J. Homer, and will bring his considerable experience to the six-member Court in the 3rd District, which is composed of 21 counties across north central Illinois.

Mr. Barry previously served on the Illinois Appellate Court from 1974 to 1994, and was found “exceptionally well-qualified” by the Illinois Bar Association when he ran unsuccessfully for the Illinois Supreme Court in 1990. As an appellate justice, he was appointed by the Supreme Court to several committees. He served as Chairman of the Supreme Court Committee on Legislation; Chairman of the Administrative Committee for the Appellate Courts; and chairman of several committees of the Illinois Judicial Conference.

While on the bench, he participated in thousands of opinions, including those of the Industrial Commission, where he also served as presiding justice. He also is a past president of the Illinois Judges Association, and the Lawyers Assistance Program which aids attorneys and judges with substance abuse problems.

Before being elected to the Appellate Court, he was elected to and served in the Illinois House of Representatives from 1960 to 1974, where he chaired or served on virtually every committee.

“Justice Barry is a well-known and highly regarded jurist, respected by lawyers for his legal abilities as well as for his dedication to our profession,” said Peoria attorney Timothy L. Bertschy, former president of the Illinois State Bar Association. “This appointment makes particularly good sense in light of the fact that the 3rd District will have a new justice with the

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election on Tuesday. This fills the other vacancy on that six-member court with an experienced and knowledgeable appellate justice.”

Mr. Bertschy has served with Mr. Barry as co-chairpersons of a special screening committee which Supreme Court Justice Thomas L. Kilbride had established to help him in making interim appointments to judicial vacancies.

“To be fair and simple, there is no better person to fill the position. He is top deck,” said Justice Kilbride. “Justice Barry has demonstrated his expertise, dedication and work ethic in giving more than 40 years of public service to the citizens of Illinois and 50 years to the profession of law. His appointment by the Supreme Court ensures that an important seat on the Appellate Court is filled by a very capable and experienced jurist until voters can select their own replacement.”

Justice Barry’s appointment will be effective December 2, 2002, and will terminate December 6, 2004. The judicial seat will be open to election in 2004, and Justice Barry said he will not be a candidate.

Justice Barry grew up in Bureau County, and after graduating from St. Bede Academy in Peru, served in the Navy in the Pacific Theater from 1943 to 1946. He graduated from LaSalle-Peru-Ogelsby Junior College, received his undergraduate degree from Marquette University and his law degree from the University of Notre Dame Law School in 1952.

While in the general practice of law, he ran as an independent for the Illinois House in 1958 when Democrats failed to appoint him to fill the vacancy left by the death of his father. He won the seat in 1960, and served in the House until his election to the Appellate Court.

Justice Barry is the recipient of numerous honors and plaudits, including the Lifetime Service Award from the Illinois Judges Association.

When he retired from the bench in 1994, he became a partner in the LaSalle firm of Aplington, Kaufman, McClintock, Steele & Barry, where his son, Patrick A. Barry, also practices.

In November 2001, he was named by Gov. George Ryan to serve on the Illinois Gaming Board, and his service there has received editorial plaudits from the Chicago Tribune.