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**February 10, 2005**

## **SUPREME COURT FILLS VACANCY IN 20<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL CIRCUIT**

The Supreme Court of Illinois announced Thursday the appointment of Marissa attorney William C. Norton to fill the judicial vacancy in the 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit.

Mr. Norton, a partner in the firm of Conn, Clendenin & Norton, has been an active practitioner of law in the five-county Circuit since he was admitted to practice in Illinois in 1978.

He will be sworn into judicial office on March 7. His appointment runs until December 4, 2006.

The vacancy was created by the election of Judge James K. Donovan to the Illinois Appellate Court.

Mr. Norton's appointment was recommended by Justice Lloyd A. Karmeier, following a review process by a special committee established by Justice Karmeier.

The committee screened 14 applicants for the vacancy and submitted a short list of the most qualified candidates to Justice Karmeier, who made the final recommendation.

"I was very pleased there were applications from so many well qualified individuals, which made my task of selecting a nominee both difficult and easy," said Justice Karmeier. "It was difficult because there were so many good and qualified candidates, but easy because many would have made a great addition to the bench in this Circuit."

Mr. Norton, who lives in Sparta, received his undergraduate degree from Southeast Missouri State University, which he attended on an athletic scholarship and was a honors student. He participated in track, cross country and golf.

He received his *Doctor of Law* degree from Southern Illinois University in 1978. He joined the firm which now bears his name and also was an assistant state's attorney in Perry County from 1978 through 1980.

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During his legal career, he has participated in nearly 3,000 civil and criminal cases, and has also handled cases on appeal.

He is a member of the American Bar Association, the Illinois State Bar Association, the Randolph County Bar Association; and a former member of the Illinois Trial Lawyers Association.

“I am very humbled by this opportunity to serve the people and I am very appreciative of the confidence shown in me by Justice Karmeier and the Supreme Court in making the appointment,” said Mr. Norton. “I view this as a real challenge and a responsibility that I undertake with the utmost seriousness and commitment.”

Clarence W. DeMoss, a well-known Nashville attorney, who served as chair of the screening committee, said each of the applicants was interviewed and their credentials reviewed before winnowing the list for Justice Karmeier.

Other members of the committee were Retired Judge Carl Becker of Red Bud; Steve Buser, an attorney practicing in Columbia, former editor of the Illinois Bar Journal and Fellow of the Illinois Bar Foundation; Paul Koeneman, an attorney in Chester; Michael McGlynn, an attorney in Belleville; and Gayl Pyatt, who practices law in Pinckneyville and is active member of the University of Illinois Foundation.

The 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit consists of St. Clair, Washington, Perry, Randolph and Monroe Counties in southwestern Illinois.