

Guidelines for Submitting Written Comments Concerning Applicants for a Judicial Vacancy in the DC Courts

The Judicial Nomination Commission (JNC) welcomes comments concerning applicants for judicial vacancies in the District of Columbia Courts. The JNC posts an online survey to facilitate submission of comments (available during comment periods at jnc.dc.gov), but also accepts written comments concerning applicants. All comments are kept confidential, and are not provided to the applicant. Comments from individuals may be submitted anonymously. Comments and letters of support from organizations **must** be signed and provided on the organization's letterhead, and should briefly set out the process the organization follows for selecting individuals to endorse/comment upon.

If you choose to prepare written comments, please address your comments to as many of the factors listed below for which you have personal knowledge:

- **Judicial Temperament** (e.g., ability to treat everyone with respect; willingness to listen with patience and courtesy; collegiality);
- **Professional Skills and Abilities** (e.g., experience; intellectual ability; analytical skills; knowledge of the law and its underlying principles; knowledge of the rules of procedure and evidence; ability and willingness to learn and develop professionally);
- **Ethics** (e.g., integrity; impartiality; objectivity; sound judgment; restraint);
- **Commitment to Diversity** (e.g., treats people equally, fairly and with respect, regardless of gender, race, national origin, economic status, sexual orientation or any other factor; promotes inclusiveness of women and minorities);
- **Leadership and Communication Skills** (e.g., ability to communicate clearly and succinctly; ability to inspire respect and confidence; decisiveness);
- **Efficiency and Organizational Skills** (e.g., ability to work efficiently and under time constraints; ability to work constructively with others; ability to manage time);
- **Writing Skills** (e.g., ability to write clearly, concisely and persuasively); and
- **Community Service** (e.g., pro bono activities; public service; volunteer activities; civic or charitable activities or memberships).

Tips for drafting effective letters of comment:

- Don't just recite the applicant's resume -- JNC already has detailed information on each applicant's work history and education. You are writing because you know the applicant. Share with JNC information that goes beyond the resume.
- Write based on personal knowledge. Telling JNC that you "understand" the applicant is skilled/has what it takes/etc. is not as helpful as you intend.
- Writing on behalf of an organization? Briefly explain the process the organization follows to decide on endorsements. And, again, don't just recite the applicant's resume in the letter of endorsement.

Submit your comments **within the posted comment period** by email to dc.jnc@dc.gov or mail to DC Judicial Nomination Commission, 515 5th St NW, Suite 235, Washington, DC 20001.