

Statement of Interest
in the Position of Chief Judge
of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia

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Superior Court of the District of Columbia

INTRODUCTION:

The District of Columbia has been my home for almost forty years. I began my legal journey as a student at Georgetown Law Center in 1983. As a full-time student in the evening division, I also worked full-time to pay for my law school education, as I had done in college. Although attending law school while working full-time was challenging, I was determined to take advantage of opportunities to excel, such as becoming a member of the Legal Ethics Law Journal. Diligence in pursuit of excellence has served me well. After a post graduation judicial clerkship with the Honorable Herbert Dixon Jr. on the Superior Court, I was fortunate to secure one of the coveted attorney positions at the District of Columbia Public Defender Service (PDS). At PDS I worked on multiple complex felony cases and argued cases before the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. I honed my craft, first as an attorney, and later as a leader and manager after being appointed by the PDS Board of Directors to the position of Deputy Director while handling homicide cases. In 1997, I was appointed to this great bench at the Superior Court of the District of Columbia and have been an Associate Judge for more than twenty-two years. In 2012, prior to the expiration of my first fifteen year term as a judge, the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure deemed me “well qualified” to serve a second fifteen year term. The designation as “well qualified” is reserved for judges whose work product, legal scholarship, dedication, and demeanor consistently reflect credit on the judicial system.

Even before I became a member of the Court, I was passionate and committed to the fair administration of justice. My law school experience motivated me to consider how I might use my legal skills to help others. Given my meager beginnings, I also understood that I was fortunate to have opportunities many others did not. I realized then, and still understand, that many things in life result from happenstance. Many people do not choose their circumstances or conditions. However, they must contend with the realities of life as they exist. As an attorney and judge, I have seen many people in the justice system whose lives are broken. I have also seen how the complexity of their lives and actions affect the lives of others. As I focus on each case, I am mindful of the impact of my decisions on people appearing before me. I am likewise appreciative of the impact my decisions have on the community. As I strive to render just and

fair decisions, I take seriously my duty to resolve disputes neutrally. At the same time, I recognize the importance of empathy and reasonableness in judicial decision making.

The Superior Court is a great institution with talented judges who work hard and commit themselves to excellence. The staff of the Superior Court is equally talented and committed. As a team, the staff and judges work collectively to serve the public and accomplish the Court's mission to fairly resolve cases and disputes. If selected as Chief Judge, I would continue the impressive and vital work of previous Chief Judges. Like the current Chief Judge, Robert Morin, the next Chief Judge will immediately confront the question of how to fully restore disrupted court operations resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, this pandemic is exacerbating the societal fault lines which are playing out in the court system. Currently, public health, criminal justice and access to justice issues collide as judges balance health and public safety issues affecting both litigants and the community. Although the Court quickly and effectively responded to the pandemic by addressing the most critical cases, the Court's modified operations have resulted in increased caseloads and backlogs. Also, given the pandemic's economic impact nationally and locally, fiscal resources will likely be strained in the future. Maintaining a sound budget and fiscal responsibility are essential to the Court's mission of fairly resolving disputes, disposing of cases, and achieving the Court's overall goals. My experience managing the budget of a government agency and the budget of the Family Court provides me with the requisite skill set to prioritize, monitor and maintain responsibility for the Court's budget.

The next Chief Judge must be prepared to rally judges and staff, adjust court policies and procedures, and inspire leadership within the entire court family at each stage of the pandemic. Additionally, the Chief Judge must work with justice partners to address the challenges affecting court operations and their work. As the last two months have made abundantly clear, coordination and collaboration inside the Court, within the Bar and with the community is essential to administering justice in the COVID-19 environment.

Although the role of the Chief Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia is both statutory and administrative, the Chief Judge serves as the face of the Court, a manager of

the Bench and a leader in the Bar. The Chief Judge is also a steward of the Court's vision: "Open to All, Trusted by All, Justice for All." The COVID-19 pandemic is testing that vision and will continue to do so like never before. The next Chief Judge will have to relish hard work and be prepared to lead and manage change through crisis. Perhaps most importantly, the next Chief Judge must be well respected and possess the temperament and character that will spur others to follow. I have always endeavored to bring people together and treat them with dignity and respect. If selected as Chief Judge, I would continue to do the same. Further, I believe my vision for the Court is right for this historic time. As I will explain below, my career, experience, and achievements demonstrate my unique qualifications for this role at this time.

EXPERIENCE:

Leadership and Management:

I have had the privilege of serving the citizens of the District of Columbia as a leader and manager at both an executive branch agency and while serving on the Bench. I played a key leadership role in helping each of those essential institutions successfully transform and transition during periods of crisis.

As a top administrator at PDS, I along with the director, shepherded the agency through one of the District's most challenging periods of fiscal constraints. The 1996 District of Columbia financial crisis posed a serious threat to PDS's continued existence. Originally left out of the federal government's commitment to provide increased support for the District's justice functions, the agency's viability was dependent upon convincing Congress to include PDS in a new direct federal funding scheme. To avoid staff furloughs when the D.C. Council reduced PDS's budget, the Director and I instituted internal measures to limit expenditures and re-prioritize agency activities while simultaneously developing a multi-pronged plan to have PDS included in the federal funding stream. After extensive meetings to educate and enlist the support of community leaders and extended negotiations with federal officials, our efforts were successful. PDS received direct funding from the federal government under the 1997

Revitalization Act, while maintaining its status as an independent local agency. As a result, PDS's budget, staff and resources more than doubled.

I also implemented significant reforms in my roles as the Deputy Presiding and then Presiding Judge of Family Court. At that time, the Family Division was under great scrutiny from local and federal officials. There was a serious debate about whether the Court would retain its family law jurisdiction or whether a separate Family Court would be established. Chief Judge, Rufus King, and the Court's leadership developed a Transition Plan to institute major reforms in the Family Division. As a Deputy Presiding Judge of the division, I participated in the development of the Family Court Transition Plan. The transition plan ultimately became the roadmap for the Family Court Act of 2001. Among other activities, my predecessor and I utilized the expertise of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ), to survey best practices nationally. We held a symposium to solicit their recommendations for improvements in all branches of the planned Family Court.

The Family Court Act provided additional funding and resources for the Superior Court to transition the Family Division into a Model Family Court within the Moultrie Courthouse. Additional judicial positions were established, the Court's first integrated case management system was implemented, enabling the exchange of data and information across court divisions, and the Superior Court's first Self- Help Center was established so litigants in Family Court cases could receive information to help them navigate the court process. Since then, Self- Help and Resource Centers have been developed in other court divisions. Finally, a facilities plan was developed to consolidate all Family Court functions in one location within the Moultrie Building to affect the purpose of the Act. That work continues today.

In my leadership roles in the Family Division, I played an integral role in the development of the Superior Court's Model Family Court. I chaired the Family Court Implementation Committee for two years and was a member for seven, as I worked with District agency representatives and court managers to implement case processing, procedures, and establish policy required under the Family Court Act. I co-chaired the Family Court Management and Oversight Team (FCMOT) for six years. The FCMOT was responsible for reviewing the

Family Court budget, facilities, technology, and core functions to ensure the implementation of the legislation. I was also a member of the Superior Court Rules Committee for seven years working along with my predecessor to shepherd the host of rule changes through the committee that were necessary to carry out the Act's mandates. Also, as Deputy Presiding Judge of the Family Court, I chaired the Juvenile Subcommittee which drafted the Court's first Attorney Practice Standards. Those standards which apply to attorneys in juvenile and neglect cases are the measure for appointment of counsel. I also led the initiative to establish the Family Treatment Court.

As a leader in the Family Court, I embraced innovative solutions that addressed the social issues that were often determinative of one's ability to comply with court orders and other obligations. Additional significant initiatives under my leadership and oversight during my tenure as Presiding Judge of the Family Court include: Parent Agreement and Cooperation ("PAC") Program (collaboration with the Family Court, American Psychological Association and the D.C. Bar to provide onsite mediation in high conflict divorce and custody cases for disadvantaged court users); Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) (collaboration with the Casey Foundation to reduce prolonged periods of juvenile detention between initial court appearance and trial); Fathering Court (court and multi-agency collaboration to permit fathers owing child support to address core problems through the provision of substance abuse treatment, training and employment which enabled fathers to pay child support and maintain a healthy relationship with their children); and Preparing Youth for Adulthood Program (PYA) (Program established to prepare teenagers aging out of the foster care system who are without a permanent home for independence).

Judicial Assignments and Illustrative Cases:

During my tenure on the Superior Court, I have been assigned to every substantive calendar and division, with probate court being the only exception. My judicial assignments include nine years in the Family Court where I presided over the following calendars: Domestic Relations, Juvenile and Neglect, Paternity and Support, Mental Health and Retardation, Juvenile Drug Court and the Family Treatment Court. Later, I was assigned to the Civil Division for a

total of seven years; three of which were spent on the Civil II calendar handling a variety of cases including medical malpractice, corporate disputes, eminent domain, and landlord and tenant matters. I handled complex Civil I cases for a total of four years, including class actions, product liability lawsuits, corporate litigation and employment discrimination cases. I have also presided over misdemeanor, Felony II, and domestic violence cases. Currently, I am assigned to the Felony I calendar, which includes homicides, sex offenses and assault with the intent to kill cases.

The wide spectrum of assignments has instilled an appreciation of the broad scope of issues that judges face on the bench and that courthouse staff must address to support them. My calendar rotations gave me an opportunity to experience and take in the myriad dynamics in distinct divisions of the court, the increased complexity of some calendars, and provided me with knowledge and insight into the diversity of litigants who enter the courthouse expecting and deserving justice. I acquired greater wisdom in meting out justice as well as the ability to appreciate the nuances involved in certain cases.

My varied assignments required me to become a student of the law and to master innumerable subject areas. For example, from 2009 through 2010, I presided over the case of *The Family Federation For World Peace And Unification International et al., v. Hyun Jin Moon et al.*, which is a class action concerning the proper succession to lead the Unification Church established by the late Reverend Moon.

Amongst other things, I wrestled with the constitutional question of whether the court had authority to delve into the administration of the Unification Church in light of principles governing the separation of church and state. I also handled the case of *Motorola Inc, et al., v. Murray et al.*, following the Court of Appeals' post-certification decision to abandon *Frye* and adopt *Daubert* as the local standard for evaluating the admission of expert testimony. *Motorola* is a class action case concerning whether extended use of certain cell phones cause cancer. Given inconclusive opinions on the subject, I evaluated the admissibility of proffered scientific testimony of several experts, assessed their opinions based on scientific testing and experiments using the standards articulated in *Daubert* as my guide.

On the other hand, when presiding over the Juvenile Drug Court, I gained deeper insight about the root causes and struggles of participants who strive to become clean and sober. The family, economic and social circumstances of many youth participating in the program was stark. Subsequently, when I chaired the Family Treatment Court Planning Committee to establish a drug treatment program for mothers in the neglect system, the experience I gained from Juvenile Drug Court helped me to better understand the vexing nature of addiction and appreciate the hard won success of those who became drug free and the support they require to remain sober.

Strategic Planning and Court Committees:

I have been entrusted with significant responsibilities for leading important work in the Court throughout my tenure. As a previous member of judicial leadership, I have participated in court-wide planning efforts to address overarching issues of vital importance to the Court. As a member of the Strategic Planning Leadership Council previously for four years, I and other members of that group, developed the Court's Strategic Plan, which guides the judiciary in the fair and timely resolution of cases. The Strategic Plan also guides all court personnel to pursue the goals of access to justice, development of a strong workforce, and working to increase the community's level of public trust and confidence in the District of Columbia Courts. As a member of the Leadership Council, I helped to establish the Court's goals. As the current chair of the Judicial Education and Training Committee, I guide the development of curricula to provide judges with the training and education they need to ensure the Court meets those objectives. The Committee offers periodic training to judges and in-service training in the spring and winter. As chair, I am also responsible for organizing judicial training for new Associate and Magistrate Judges.

Recently, I was appointed by the Chief Judge of the D.C. Court of Appeals to chair the Advisory Committee on Workplace Conduct. The committee is charged with developing policies governing workplace conduct between judges and court staff and addressing issues related to judicial hiring. The committee is reviewing a proposed Employment Dispute Resolution Plan to present to the Access to Justice Commission and ultimately the Joint Committee.

As a member of the Superior Court Rules Committee from 2001 through 2008, I and Committee members evaluated proposed rules of every division of the Court. Typically, Advisory Committees for each court division proposed and vetted rules and amendments for the Superior Court Rules Committee's review. Following review, publication and comment, the rules whether adopted fully as presented or amended are presented to the Board of Judges for approval and then to the D.C. Court of Appeals. I have also served on the Landlord and Tenant Rules Committee, Small Claims Rules Committee and previously chaired the Family Rules Advisory Committee. From 2002 through 2004, I served on the Committee for the Selection and Tenure of Magistrate Judges. The committee reviews Magistrate Judges nearing completion of their four-year term. The committee also vets applicants for Magistrate Judge positions and recommends candidates to the Chief Judge.

Further, as a member of the Privacy and Access to Electronic Records Committee for two years, I participated with other members in developing court policy concerning how and to what extent the Court would make electronic case information available to the public. Key considerations included statutory and legal restrictions regarding information sharing in varying case-types including, but not limited to, domestic violence, neglect and abuse, juvenile delinquency, and mental health cases. The committee also considered the propriety of making pretrial pleadings available electronically before allegations contained in them were adjudicated fully.

COMMUNITY PRESENCE AND CONNECTION:

It is important for the Court to maintain a strong presence in the community and educate the public about the Court's process and available services. More importantly, it is critical for the Court to receive valuable feedback from the community. Although necessary to protect public safety, when the unprecedented, lengthy COVID-19 modified court operations are lifted, it will become even more imperative for the Chief Judge, as the public face of the Court, to engage in outreach to the community and be responsive to community concerns.

My long history of service both on and off the bench has made me a familiar, trusted, community leader within the District's legal community as well as in the community at large. The support of family, friends, mentors and solid public schools enabled me to excel professionally. My dedication to community service stems in part from my desire to pay forward the benefits I received from the mentorship and assistance from others. I also greatly enjoyed tutoring middle school children in Southeast, presiding over a Truancy Prevention Program at Garnett Patterson and Kramer Middle Schools, working to address the problem of substance abuse, assisting high school students at Thurgood Marshall Academy and Banneker High School with internship opportunities, and mentoring law clerks and members of the Women's Bar Association.

As a member of the board of the Transitional Housing Corporation, known widely as "Housing Up," I have seen firsthand the value of providing housing and services to the homeless permitting them to become independent and self-sustaining. As a member of many mayoral committees focused on youth, juvenile justice, and addiction, I have been solution-oriented in furthering the needs of the most vulnerable. Moreover, I have participated in countless activities to further the exposure and increase the knowledge of students at every level, ranging from grade school to law school. I was honored to serve as the Charles Hamilton Houston Chair at North Carolina Central University Law School where I taught Civil Rights. Presently, I am an adjunct professor at Howard University Law School where I teach a Civil Rights class. Quality education is life changing and benefits members of the community. As Chief Judge, I would continue my involvement in the community and support programs that help people live better lives.

VISION AND PLANS FOR THE COURT:

The Court's ability to fairly resolve disputes is central to maintaining public trust and confidence. The Court must also be able to respond to new challenges in a complex and ever-changing environment. The Court has implemented strategic management to maximize transparency, accountability, and align operations and financial resources with the Court's established goals. To achieve its goals, the Court has developed a comprehensive Strategic Plan that includes measurable objectives which are evaluated from year to year. The Strategic

Planning Leadership Council maintains focused attention on the established objectives to ensure the Court achieves positive results. The current Strategic Plan covers a five year period and expires in 2022. The next Chief Judge will be responsible for ensuring the success of the current Plan and leading the development of the next one.

When developing a new Strategic Plan, it will be vitally important to leverage lessons learned from the COVID-19 crisis, incorporate data informed best practices and bolster strategic relationships with key stakeholders to address the community's needs. One consistent lesson from disasters such as the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, Hurricane Katrina, and now the coronavirus pandemic, is that the Court as an institution must always plan for unknown events that may detrimentally affect court operations. Questions that often present themselves during these emergencies include:

- How does the court access its records if the primary physical location is not accessible?
- How and where can hearings be conducted if the primary physical location is not accessible?
- How can hearings be conducted if litigants, counsel, and the court are in separate locations?
- How can virtual technology be used for trials and court operations?
- How can the rights of parties be protected in the context of remote proceedings?

These questions are being addressed around the world, with some courts and other institutions being better prepared or faring better than others. The Superior Court leadership and staff's response to the pandemic has been nothing short of phenomenal. Recently, the Court established a COVID-19 workgroup to consider long and short-term issues related to reopening the court building.

Moreover, court division leaders, judges, and staff are working with the Executive Office of the Court, the Information and Technology Division, and the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration to explore options for using technology to address cases now and in the future. The Chief Judges have implemented new court procedures and policies to accommodate court users and litigants and they periodically update the public by posting court orders and information on the D.C. Courts website. Members of the Court's leadership team are also

working with agencies affected by the Court's reduced operations to determine how to continue serving the Court's clientele. Notably, since March, the Court has gradually increased the number of virtual courtrooms and is operating the following calendars remotely: adult arraignments; neglect and abuse; mental health observations; competency hearings and evaluations; family court emergencies; civil and probate emergencies. As the Chief Judge, I would support these efforts to further expand virtual court hearings until the Court's operations are fully restored. Before starting jury trials, I would collaborate with local officials, judges and agency partners to develop a realistic timeframe for publicly reopening the court buildings. I would always prioritize the health and safety of the public, court personnel and judges first. Additionally, guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") would be implemented throughout the Court before the public returns to the courthouse.

Ensuring world class business continuity and operations, however, is only one aspect of the administration of justice. As we focus on expediency and case processing, courts should never lose sight of the fact that real people underly and are impacted by every court case. To address the needs of court users in some parts of the Court, problem-solving approaches which help to improve the condition of individuals should be embraced. Drug Courts, Community Courts, and Mental Health Court are specialty courts that offer creative alternatives to the traditional method of handling cases. The benefit of these courts to the community is well established. Participants who become drug free or receive needed mental health treatment have improved prospects of maintaining stable lives, better family relationships and the chance of becoming law-abiding and productive citizens. As Chief Judge, I would continue to support specialty courts to improve outcomes for the community.

The established strategic goals provide many opportunities to expand and improve operations and programming.

GOAL I: ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL – The Courts have a responsibility to eliminate barriers to meaningful participation in the judicial process and to accessing court services.

Partnerships with the Bar:

In the District of Columbia there is an overwhelming need for additional attorney volunteers to represent individuals without counsel seeking to vindicate their rights. I would build on the Court's existing partnership with the Bar to make the Court more accessible for unrepresented low-income litigants. Unfortunately, given current economic conditions and growing unemployment rates, many residents who were not previously disadvantaged may face precarious economic circumstances and thus need pro bono counsel. Now more than ever, volunteerism is needed. The Court has worked with legal service providers and volunteers to bridge the gap between those represented and those who are not for decades. Legal services organizations and law students provide invaluable services to self-represented litigants. In Landlord and Tenant and Small Claims Court, attorneys and law students offer a mix of full and limited scope representation. In the Domestic Violence Division, volunteer attorneys and law students represent some petitioners in temporary and civil protection order hearings. More recently, the Probate Division opened a Resource Center in partnership with George Washington University Law School to provide counsel to unrepresented litigants. The fact remains, however, that much more is needed. We should not be satisfied with our efforts until everyone who needs counsel has access to it.

To address the need of unrepresented litigants, I would establish a Pro Bono Office in the Superior Court to coordinate representation between litigants and members of the Bar. Staff in the Court's Pro Bono Office will also be responsible for developing new ways to help litigants navigate the legal process.

Currently, there is a growing need to assist elderly residents and incapacitated individuals in need of guardians and conservators in the Probate Division. As Chief Judge I would establish a public education program using court staff and members of the Bar to promote awareness and education about probate matters. The program would include information concerning estate planning, the use of advanced directives and powers of attorney and options for addressing concerns of incapacitation.

Electronic Filing:

To address the Court's long-term goals of operating in a paperless environment, I would expand electronic capacity, to include e-Filing capability where it does not currently exist and improve the current e-Filing process. I would also work with the Information and Technology Division and the Executive Office of the Court to explore options to expand remote access to electronic court dockets and filings. I would also collaborate with stakeholders to decrease redundancies in tracking data amongst agencies.

Juror Satisfaction:

Although the new jury call-in system is working very well, improving jury service and juror satisfaction is always a key goal of the Court. As Chief Judge, I would survey jurors to determine whether additional improvements in the jury system are recommended.

Criminal Justice:

I would collaborate with criminal justice representatives to determine whether meaningful opportunities exist for restorative justice in select misdemeanor cases to produce more effective results. Research on restorative justice models indicate the effectiveness of this approach in increasing community confidence in the Court and providing positive benefits for victims and the accused.

GOAL II: FAIR & TIMELY CASE RESOLUTION – The Court is committed to resolving disputes and legal matters in a fair and timely manner.

Case Processing:

The Court monitors the timeframe for disposition of cases by reviewing trial certainty and continuances through the use of performance standards, business intelligence reports and dashboards. The pandemic will undoubtedly skew the Court's performance management results.

Therefore, I would explore the development of a new set of metrics to evaluate the Court's ingenuity and resilience in response to COVID-19.

GOAL III: A PROFESSIONAL & ENGAGED WORKFORCE – The Court will ensure a professional engaged workforce that consistently achieves excellence and is agile to meet the demands of a changing environment.

Adaptive Workforce:

Although the Court has been quite successful in advancing its strategic goals thus far, employee satisfaction as measured by the Strategic Plan must be improved. As Chief Judge, I would focus intentionally on enhancing this outcome through further training and professional development opportunities. Training is an important investment, which improves the skills and expertise of personnel enabling them to contribute more effectively to the Court's mission. I also would leverage the Center for Education and Training to prepare staff for transitioning to a more heavily focused technology work environment. I would increase the use of technology for teleworking, maxiflex and alternative work schedules.

Succession Planning:

To address the succession planning for projected attrition of judges, I would establish a Management Training Institute for Judges through the Center for Education and Training. Judges participating in that Institute would learn about court management and administration to prepare them for leadership. I would also continue the Management Training Institute for non-judicial staff.

GOAL IV: RESILIENT & RESPONSIVE TECHNOLOGY – The Court will continue to enhance information technology capabilities to provide the highest level of service to the public and state of the art technology tools to its workforce.

For many years, the Court's operations have relied heavily on technology. In the throes of the pandemic, the Court effectively implemented changes in operations to respond to emerging issues in every division. The pandemic has taught us that many court proceedings can be conducted remotely. As Chief Judge, I would: 1) work with the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration and the Budget and Finance Division to continue developing the Court's technology infrastructure to expand the Court's bandwidth; 2) ensure that the Office of Management and Budget understand the Court's fiscal needs to fulfill its mission; and 3) re-examine the Courts' Strategic Plan and Facilities Master Plan to assess what efficiencies can be gained from the expanded use of technology.

Moreover, I would also work with the established COOP stakeholder group to coordinate these lessons learned, with the intent to expand the use of technological advances and realized efficiencies emerging from this crisis. Indeed, the increased reliance on technology resulting from the pandemic has made the need to evaluate and prepare for threats to and through technology more urgent. Long-term planning and coordination among critical agencies are essential to reducing the impact and duration of disruption to the justice system.

GOAL V: EFFECTIVE COURT MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION – Effective management and operation of the justice system for the District of Columbia requires a team of knowledgeable professionals with a common mission and shared resources collaborating to achieve results that best serve the public.

Financial Management:

In addition to my previous budget experience, like other Chief Judges, I would work with the Court's highly skilled Executive Office and the Budget and Finance Division staff to continue sound fiscal management of the Court. A key focus must be the impact of COVID-19 on the Court's current and future budgets. The Superior Court has more than six-hundred staff members, sixty-two Associate Judges, twenty-four Magistrate Judges, and a host of Senior Judges. The Court also maintains its facilities. Two-thirds of the Courts' operating budget, except for the Capital and Defender Services budget, is devoted to personnel services. Therefore,

the Court must be vigilant in monitoring expenditures, contracts and other obligations. The Court must also be flexible in making necessary budgetary adjustments.

Justice Resource Center:

If financially feasible, I would implement the current plan to establish a Justice Resource Center at the site of the D.C. Recorder of Deeds office to provide services for some court users.

CONCLUSION:

I appreciate the significant role of the Court as the third branch of government and its responsibility to the citizens of this community. I have committed my career to improving the justice system and believe that the breadth and depth of my experience as an agency administrator, judicial leader and trial judge has prepared me for the responsibilities of this position. My life experience and service on the bench also provides me with an appropriate balance of empathy and a sense of responsibility to ensure that justice is served in the courtroom and in court administration. As Chief Judge, I will diligently preserve the Court's neutral role and advocate for the Court's independence. I will also work tirelessly to ensure that the Court's vision of being Open to All, Trusted by All and providing Justice to all is upheld.