



## November 5, 2001-January 2, 2002

2428 Respondents, 1943 Weighted188 Supreme Court527 Appellate Court1713 Lower Courts

# JUSTICE AT STAKE – STATE JUDGES FREQUENCY QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.1 How would you rate the job being done by courts and judges in your state?

	Supremo	preme Appeals Lowe		r Total	
Excellent	39	35	35	35	
Good	57	58	59	60	
Just fair	4	7	4	4	
Poor		0	0	0	
Don't know		0	1	1	
(Blank)	1	0	0	0	
Excellent/good	96	93	95	94	
Fair/poor	4	7	4	5	
Exc/Good - Fair/poor (ref:SATISFAC)	92	86	90	90	

Q.2 How do you think appellate judges should be selected in your state?

y en access upp economy and economic	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Merit selection followed by retention election		49	53	52
Non-partisan popular election	19	19	18	19
Appointment by the governor with legislative				
confirmation	16	9	10	10
Appointment by the governor without				
legislative confirmation	4	8	8	8
Partisan popular election	3	11	6	7
Legislative appointment or election	5	2	2	2
Don't know	1	2	1	1
(Blank)	2	1	1	1
(ref:SELEC)				

Q.3 How do you think trial judges should be selected in your state?

,	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Merit selection followed by retention election	43	42	42	40
Non-partisan popular election	28	27	29	30
Partisan popular election	5	14	12	13
Appointment by the governor without				
legislative confirmation	3	7	8	7
Appointment by the governor with legislative				
confirmation	14	6	5	5
Legislative appointment or election	5	2	2	2
Don't know	1	1	1	1
(Blank)	2	2	1	1
(ref:TRIAL)				

Q.4 How satisfied are you with the judicial appointment process -- for vacancies and full terms -- at the state level?

	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Very satisfied	48	30	27	27
Somewhat satisfied	39	45	46	46
Somewhat dissatisfied	6	14	17	17
Very dissatisfied	6	9	8	9
(Don't know / Refused)		2	2	2
(Blank)		1	0	0
Total Satisfied	87	75	73	72
Total Dissatisfied	13	23	25	26
Satisfied-Dissatisfied(ref:SATAPPT)	74	53	47	46

Q.5 How much information would you say is made available to judicial candidates about election laws and rules of conduct for judicial elections?

3	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Great deal	46	50	50	50
Some	28	32	33	33
Just a little	3	6	6	6
Not at all	6	5	5	5
(Don't know/refused)	14	5	5	5
(Blank)		2	1	1
Great deal/Some	74	82	83	83
Just a little/Not at all	10	11	11	11
Great/some - Little/not (ref:ELECLAWS)	64	71	71	72

 $Q.6\ How\ satisfied\ are\ you\ with\ the\ conduct\ and\ tone\ of\ judicial\ campaigns?$ 

in the second se	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Very satisfied	13	12	12	12
Somewhat satisfied	30	34	36	36
Somewhat dissatisfied	16	28	29	29
Very dissatisfied	23	15	14	15
(Don't know / Refused)	11	6	7	6
(Blank)	6	5	2	3
Total Satisfied	43	46	48	48
Total Dissatisfied	40	43	43	44
Satisfied-Dissatisfied(ref:CONDUCT)	3	2	5	4

Q.7 Do you think the conduct and tone of judicial campaigns has gotten better or worse over the past 5 years?

	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Much better	2	2	2	2
Somewhat better	6	7	6	6
Stayed the same	20	26	27	26
Somewhat worse		35	34	35
Much worse	27	20	20	21
Don't know	13	6	8	7
(Blank)	6	4	3	3
Total Better	7	9	8	8
Total Worse	54	56	54	55
Better - Worse(ref:WORSE)	46	-47	-46	-47

Q.8 Are you under any pressure to raise money for your campaign during election years?

	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Yes	36	43	45	46
No	23	29	34	33
Not applicable	37	24	19	19
(Blank)		4	2	2
Yes - No	13	14	12	13

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Q.9 (IF YES IN YNFUND) How much pressure are you under to raise money for your campaign during election years?

Supreme	e Appeals	Lower	Total
63	58	46	48
34	36	45	44
1	5	7	7
1	1	1	1
	-	-	-
	-	1	0
97	93	92	92
3	7	8	8
	63	63 5834 361 51 1	34 36 451 5 71 1 1 1 1

Q.10 Please mark whether you agree or disagree with the following statement:

"Television ads are the best way for a judicial candidate to make their qualifications known to the public."

	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Strongly agree	18	12	12	12
Somewhat agree	22	32	30	31
Somewhat disagree	16	18	20	20
Strongly disagree		28	27	26
(Don't know/refused)		11	11	11
(Blank)	3	4	2	2
Total agree	40	44	42	43
Total disagree	43	45	47	46
Agree-disagree(ref:TVADS)	3	-1	-4	-3

Q.11 Please mark whether you agree or disagree with the following statement:

"Judicial candidates should participate in publicly sponsored debates."

	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Strongly agree	20	25	23	24
Somewhat agree	25	28	29	29
Somewhat disagree	13	14	13	13
Strongly disagree		29	30	29
(Don't know/refused)		5	5	5
(Blank)		4	2	2
Total agree	45	52	52	53
Total disagree	45	43	43	43
Agree-disagree(ref:DEBATES)	1	10	9	10

Q.12 How much influence do you think campaign contributions made to judges have on their decisions?

	<b>Supreme</b>	<b>Appeals</b>	Lower	Total
A great deal of influence	9	6	4	4
Some influence	26	26	21	22
Just a little influence	10	17	20	20
No influence at all	28	32	36	36
Don't know	24	16	17	16
(Blank)	4	4	2	2
Total Great/some	35	31	26	26
Total Little/no	38	49	55	56
Great/some - Little/no(ref:INFLUENC)	3	-18	-30	-30

Q.13 Have you ever been publicly criticized in your role as judge by any of the following individuals or groups:

	Supreme	<b>Appeals</b>	Lower	Total
Have not been publicly criticized	24	46	44	44
The media	56	34	38	38
Special interest group in state	46	24	21	22
Other public official	38	18	20	20
Other judicial candidate	23	9	11	11
Political party	19	6	3	4
National special interest group		5	3	4
(Blank)	1	4	2	2
(ref:PUBCRIT)				

Q.14 Since you became a judge, have you ever been publicly criticized for any of the following?

	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Decision in criminal case	47	36	41	40
Decision in civil case	53	30	26	27
Personal life/characteristics	7	5	6	6
Ideology	24	8	5	6
Political affiliation	9	6	3	3
Connections to special interest groups	14	4	1	2
Have not been publicly criticized	23	41	41	41
(Blank)	2	3	2	2
(ref:PUBCRIT2)				

Q.15 If you have been publicly criticized, have you ever held back or felt restrained in responding to criticism?

	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Yes	70	49	54	53
No	9	9	6	6
Have not been publicly criticized	18	33	34	33
(Blank)	3	9	7	7
Yes - No(ref:RESPNSE)	61	40	47	47

## [1036 Respondents]

Q.16 If yes, what are the two most important reasons that you held back or felt restrained in responding to criticism?

	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
State Code of Judicial Conduct	62	69	74	73
Personal belief that judges should not respond	d49	48	42	43
Criticism wasn't worthy of a response	36	34	34	34
Concern about media coverage	11	9	13	12
Lack of effective response	9	7	6	6
Reluctance to take on special interest group of	r			
other public official	8	6	6	6
Supporters responded on my behalf	10	5	5	6
Lack of money	1	2	0	0
Other	2	3	3	3
(Blank)		-	0	0
(ref:RESPOND)				

Q.17 Do you feel that your state's Code of Judicial Conduct prevents judges from adequately responding to unfair or misleading criticism of decisions?

	Supreme	Appeals		
Yes	47	53	66	64
No	45	35	26	27
Don't know	5	9	8	8
(Blank)	3	2	1	1
Yes - No(ref:ETHICS2)	3	18	40	37

Q.18 Do you feel that your state's Code of Judicial Conduct contains too many restrictions on judicial campaign speech; too few restrictions on judicial campaign speech; or the right amount and type of restrictions on judicial campaign speech?

	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
The right amount and type	56	55	52	52
Too many restrictions	14	23	26	26
Not applicable	17	9	8	8
Don't know	4	5	7	7
Too few restrictions	4	6	5	6
(Blank)	5	3	1	2
(ref:ETHICS)				

Q.19 Here is a list of phrases which some people say are the responsibilities of courts and judges. Please read the entire list and rank what you think are the three most important responsibilities of courts and judges.

#### First Choice

	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Making impartial decisions	56	60	53	54
Ensuring fairness under law	21	19	27	26
Defending constitutional rights and freedoms	11	8	8	8
Providing equal justice for rich and poor	3	4	5	5
Being an independent check on other branche	es			
of government	4	3	1	1
Protecting individual rights	2	1	1	1
Protecting civil rights		0	0	0
Dispensing punishment for crimes		0	0	0
Resisting political pressure		0	0	0
Advancing social and economic justice		1	0	0
(Blank)	3	3	2	2

#### **First or Second Choice**

That of Second Choice				
	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Making impartial decisions	76	78	76	77
Ensuring fairness under law	55	54	65	64
Defending constitutional rights and freedoms	25	24	19	20
Providing equal justice for rich and poor	13	17	18	18
Protecting individual rights	9	5	7	7
Being an independent check on other branche	es			
of government	13	12	5	6
Dispensing punishment for crimes	1	1	2	2
Protecting civil rights	1	1	1	1
Resisting political pressure	1	1	1	1
Advancing social and economic justice		1	1	1
(Blank)	3	3	2	2

## **Any Choice**

v	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Making impartial decisions	85	87	87	87
Ensuring fairness under law	72	72	80	79
Providing equal justice for rich and poor	29	37	45	43
Defending constitutional rights and freedoms	45	39	32	33
Being an independent check on other branche	es			
of government	33	30	19	21
Protecting individual rights	18	13	15	15
Dispensing punishment for crimes	1	3	6	6
Resisting political pressure	5	6	3	3
Protecting civil rights	2	2	2	2
Advancing social and economic justice	2	2	2	2
(Blank)	3	3	2	2
(ref:CRTRESP)				

Q.20 Please read the following series of concerns that some people have about courts and judges. For each one, please mark whether it concerns you a lot, concerns you a little, doesn't concern you too much, or doesn't concern you at all.

of doesn't concern you at an.								
	Conc a Lot	Conc a Lttle	Not Conc Much		DK	Blnk	Total Conc	
20 In some states, nearly half of all								
Supreme Court cases involve someone who								
has given money to one or more of the								
judges hearing the case								
	56	17	12	7	4	4	73	19
Supreme.		17		7	-	4		
Appeals		25	11	7	2	2	<b>78</b>	18
Lower		24	14	8	3	1	<b>74</b>	22
Total	49	25	14	8	3	1	74	22
21 There are few restrictions on special								
interest groups who buy advertising to								
influence the outcomes of judicial elections								
and decisions								
		10	7	_	~	2	<b>5</b> 0	10
Supreme.		12	7	6	5	3	79	13
Appeals		18	7	6	2	2	83	13
Lower	62	22	7	5	3	1	84	12
Total	62	21	7	5	3	1	84	12
22 Special interest groups are trying to use								
the courts to shape public policy to their								
own ends								
	60	12	12	2	1	2	01	15
Supreme.		13	12	3	1	3	81	15
Appeals		20	11	4	1	2	82	15
Lower	60	25	9	4	2	1	85	13
Total	60	24	9	4	2	1	84	13
23 In some states, as few as 13 percent of								
people vote in judicial elections								
Supreme.	59	19	6	7	5	4	<b>78</b>	13
Appeals		22	11	4	3	2	79	15
		23	10	4	3	1	82	14
Lower				-		_		
Total	60	22	10	4	3	1	82	14
24 Because voters have little information								
about judicial candidates, judges are often								
selected for reasons other than their								
qualifications								
Supreme	64	22	4	3	5	3	86	6
		23		3				-
Appeals		_	6	_	4	2	84	9
Lower		26	6	3	3	1	87	9
Total	<b></b> 61	26	6	3	3	1	<b>87</b>	9

25 Some people say that there are 2 systems of justice in the U.S one for the rich and powerful and one for everyone	a	a		Not Conc at all	DK	Blnk	Total Conc	
else. Supreme	57	24	9	5	2	3	81	14
Appeals		26	11	6	1	3	79	17
Lower		27	11	5	2	1	81	16
Total(ref:CONCERNS)	54	27	11	5	2	1	81	16

Q.26 In this section is a series of proposals that have been made to help improve the way we elect judges. For each one, please mark whether you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the proposal.

swengs, eppere une proposum									Supp
	Strno	Smwt	Smwt	Strng			Total	Total	Supp -
		Supp		U	DK	Blnk	Supp		Opp
26 States should provide voter	~чрр	~чрр	opp	opp		2,,,,,	~чрр	opp	OPP
guides prior to judicial elections to									
help inform voters about the									
candidates in each race									
Supreme.	48	32	3	5	9	2	81	8	73
Appeals		28	8	8	4	2	79	15	64
Lower		31	7	9	6	1	77	16	62
Total		31	7	9	6	2	<b>78</b>	15	62
27 States should require that all									
judicial candidates disclose the									
individuals, parties, or organizations									
who donate money to their									
campaigns									
Supreme.	85	6	1	1	5	2	91	2	90
Appeals	<b></b> 81	13	2	0	2	2	94	2	92
Lower	75	17	3	2	2	1	92	4	88
Total	<b></b> 76	17	3	2	2	1	92	4	88
20.00									
28 States should require that all									
political advertisements in judicial									
elections clearly state who is paying									
for the ad	0.6	7	1	1	4	2	02	1	0.2
Supreme.		7	1	1	4	2	93	1	92
Appeals		9	1	1	2	2	94 05	2	92
Lower		11	1	1	2 2	1	95 05	2 2	93
Total	84	11	1	1	2	1	95	L	94

29 Independent citizen boards	_	Smwt Supp		_	DK	Blnk	Total Supp		Supp - Opp
should be established to inform the public about misleading or inaccurate advertising in judicial campaigns									
Supreme.		30	6	5	14	2	<b>72</b>	12	60
Appeals		29	10	10	9	2	70	19	51
Lower	39	31	10	8	10	1	70	18	52
Total	39	31	10	8	10	1	<b>70</b>	19	51
30 States should limit campaign contributions to judicial candidates									
Supreme.		16	10	9	12	2	68	19	<b>49</b>
Appeals	44	27	7	12	7	2	71	20	<b>52</b>
Lower	45	27	10	10	7	1	71	21	51
Total	44	27	10	11	6	1	71	21	50
31 Judges should be prohibited from presiding over and ruling in cases when one of the sides has given money to their campaign  Supreme.  Appeals	35 29 34	20 24 24 24 24	20 20 20 21	15 20 16 17	7 4 5 5	3 2 1 2	55 53 58 56	35 40 36 37	20 13 22 19
32 Judicial candidates should condemn negative or misleading advertising done on their behalf									
Supreme.		16	3	-	4	2	90	3	87
Appeals		14	1	1	3	2	93	2	91
Lower		13	2	1	4	1	92	3	90
Total	<b></b> 79	13	2	1	3	1	93	3	90
33 Judicial candidates should commit to not making misleading or unfair accusations about opponents during elections									
Supreme.		6	1	1	3	2	94	1	93
Appeals		6	0	0	2	2	96	1	95
Lower		5	1	0	1	1	96	1	95
Total	<b></b> 91	5	1	0	1	1	96	1	95

	Strng	Smwt	Smwt	Strng			Total	Total	Supp -
	0			Opp	DK	Blnk	Supp	Opp	Opp
34 Judicial candidates should never make promises during elections about how they will rule in cases	• •	••	••				••	••	••
that may come before them					_	_			
Supreme.	95	1	-	-	3	2	95	-	95
Appeals	<b></b> .96	1	1	-	1	2	97	1	96
Lower	94	3	1	0	1	1	97	1	96
Total(ref:PROPOSLS)	95	2	1	0	1	1	97	1	96

Q.35 Here is a summary of a proposal that would change the way state elections for judges are financed.

Under this proposal, judicial candidates would no longer raise money from private sources. Instead, each candidate would receive a set amount of money from a publicly financed election fund. Spending by candidates would be limited to the amount they receive from the fund.

Based on this statement, would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose such a proposal?

r r	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Strongly support	34	27	30	30
Somewhat support	30	31	31	31
Somewhat oppose	11	10	11	11
Strongly oppose	13	22	18	18
(Neither)		2	3	3
(Don't know/refused)		7	6	6
(Blank)		2	1	1
Total support	64	58	61	61
Total oppose	23	32	29	29
Support - Oppose(ref:PUBFINAC)	40	26	32	31

Q.36 Here is a summary of a proposal that deals with the way judges are selected.

Under this proposal, a non-partisan panel of citizens, legal professionals, and civic leaders evaluates and recommends potential judges to the governor. The governor then chooses a nominee from the list who must then be confirmed by the state legislature. After each term, the public then votes on whether a judge should keep the seat or be removed from office. If a judge is rejected, the selection process starts again.

Based on this statement, would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose such a proposal?

	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Strongly support	32	20	19	19
Somewhat support	27	24	27	27
Somewhat oppose	8	16	14	14
Strongly oppose	31	35	34	35
(Neither)		2	2	2
(Don't know/refused)		2	2	2
(Blank)	1	1	1	1
Total support	59	44	46	45
Total oppose	39	51	48	50
Support - Oppose(ref:MERIT)	20	-6	-2	-4

### Q.37 In what year were you born?

	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
18 - 24	<b>-</b>	-	-	-
25 - 29		-	-	-
30 - 34		-	0	0
35 - 39		0	1	1
40 - 44	2	2	6	6
45 - 49	6	9	16	15
50 - 54	23	25	28	27
55 - 59	26	21	23	22
60 - 64	17	18	15	15
Over 64	21	20	8	10
No answer	5	4	3	3
(ref:AGE)				

#### Q.39 What is your race?

	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
White	89	89	87	87
Black	5	4	5	5
Hispanic/Latino	3	2	3	3
Other	1	2	2	2
(Blank)	3	3	3	3
(ref:RACE)				

Q.40 How would you classify the judiciary in your state?

	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Very liberal	1	1	1	1
Somewhat liberal	7	8	8	8
Moderate	51	46	45	46
Somewhat conservative	32	35	35	35
Very conservative	4	6	5	5
Don't know	1	2	3	3
(Blank)	4	2	2	2
(ref:JUDCLASS)				

Q.42 In your current position, were you initially appointed to fill a vacancy or were you elected?

	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Appointed to fill vacancy	64	57	54	53
Elected	26	35	40	41
Not applicable	8	6	4	4
(Blank)		2	2	2
(ref:CURRENT)				

Q.44 Do you consider your court's jurisdiction to be mainly urban, suburban, small town, mixed, or rural?

	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Urban	7	20	33	32
Suburban	1	3	11	10
Small town	2	1	11	10
Mixed	68	66	32	36
Rural	2	2	11	10
Other	18	6	0	1
(Blank)	3	2	1	1
(ref:CRTTYPE)				

Q.45 Generally speaking, which of the following best describes yourself?

	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Strong Democrat	14	18	17	17
Weak Democrat	9	11	11	11
Independent-lean Democrat	16	16	16	16
Independent	25	13	16	16
Independent-lean Republican	7	9	10	10
Weak Republican		13	13	13
Strong Republican		15	11	12
(Blank)	11	7	6	6
(ref:PTYID7)				

Q.38 What is your gender?

	Supreme	Appeals	Lower	Total
Male	72	80	79	79
Female	26	19	19	19
(Blank)	2	2	2	2
(ref:GENDER)				