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Where to Find Information About the Judges and Justices Who are Standing for Retention on the November 2010 Ballot

Kansas voters now have access to a valuable tool to improve judicial accountability. The Kansas Judicial Report Card is an educational, non-partisan evaluation available to Kansas voters in judicial retention elections. The report card is based on independent, confidential surveys of lawyers, jurors, witnesses and others who have had direct experience with a judge's professional performance. Judges are also asked to evaluate their own performance and identify their strengths and weaknesses.

This report card can be found on the website of the Kansas Commission on Judicial Performance: www.kansasjudicialperformance.org. As the November election approaches, voters are reminded of the availability of the report card as an important resource to help them decide how to vote in judicial retention elections. No longer will a Kansas voter need to say as she or he leaves the polling booth, "I didn't know a thing about those judges on the retention ballot."

The Kansas Legislature established the Kansas Commission on Judicial Performance and mandated the judicial performance evaluation process. The goals of the evaluation process are: To improve the judicial performance of individual judges and justices and thereby improve the judiciary as a whole; to disseminate the results from the judicial performance evaluation process to enable voters in retention elections to make informed decisions about whether to continue judges and justices in office; and to protect judicial independence while promoting public accountability of the judiciary.

The Commission evaluates judges standing for retention in Kansas, including district magistrate judges, district court judges, Court of Appeals judges, and Supreme Court justices. The Commission's website summarizes the results of the surveys, provides biographical information on each judge, and makes a recommendation about whether the judge should be retained on the bench. Kansas voters are encouraged by the Commission to carefully review the information on the website and then arrive at an independent conclusion on whether to vote to retain a judge or justice.

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