

**Alaska Judicial Council**  
**Voting Information**  
**For the Senate State Affairs Committee**  
Feb. 18, 2015

Since permanent records have been kept starting in January 1, 1984, members of the Judicial Council have voted on **1,149 applications for judicial nomination**. This fact sheet shows how some of those votes were taken.

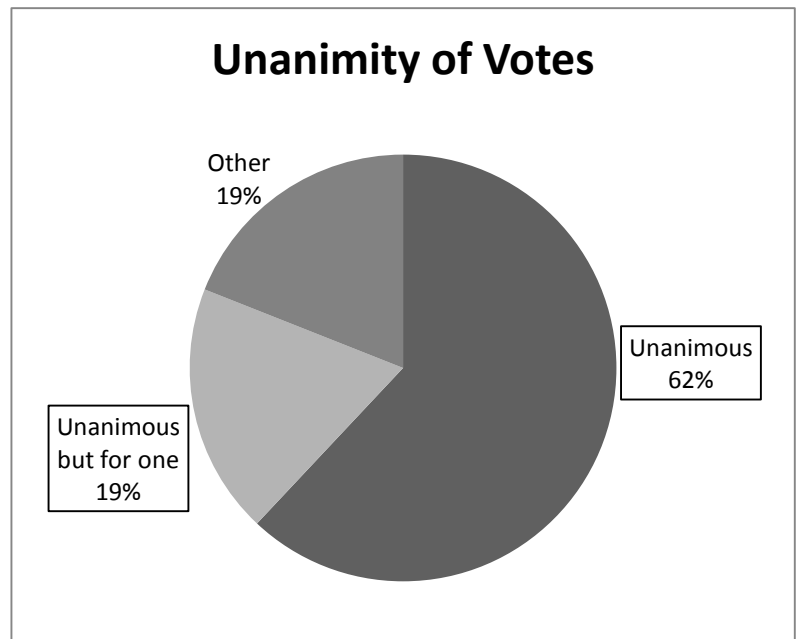
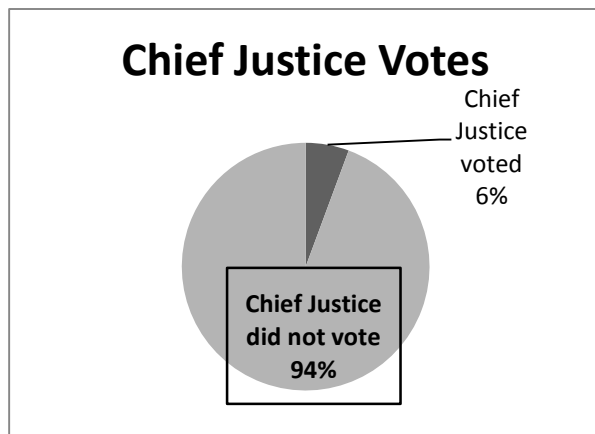
- **Council members have a high rate of agreement about nomination decisions**

Historically, Council members have been unanimous or nearly so in their choices about which applicants are most qualified. In 81% of all votes taken (N=932), the Council's votes were unanimous or "unanimous except for one."

Of those 932 votes, most were unanimous (62%). In the remainder, (19%) only one person voted differently from the others.

- **The Chief Justice rarely votes**

Given the Council members' high rate of unanimous voting, it is not surprising that the Chief Justice rarely votes. (The Chief Justice votes only when to do so would change the outcome, usually because of a 3-3 tie). Over the past 30 years, chief justices have voted only 69 times (6% of all votes). Thus, 94% of the time, the chief justice does not vote.



- **Attorney/nonattorney vote splits are very rare**

On those rare occasions when the Chief Justice is called upon to vote, the reason is most often because some of the attorneys and some of the nonattorneys are together, but no four-vote consensus has emerged. Fifty-three of the 69 chief justice votes occurred where some attorneys were in agreement with some nonattorneys. Thus, only 16 times (out of 1,149) votes involved disagreements about nomination decisions that broke along attorney-nonattorney lines (less than 2% of all votes taken).

- **When called upon to vote, the chief justices usually forward the name in question to the governor.**

Almost three-quarters of the time (74%), chief justices voted “yes” to forward the name in question to the governor.

Thus, the chief justices’ 69 votes have given governors 51 more nominees than would have been available if the chief justices had not voted.

- **The Council usually forwards more than two names to the governor**

For most vacancies, the Council nominates more than 2 applicants: About 73% of the time Council members have nominated more than the minimum number of applicants.

On average, about 37% of all candidates’ names are forwarded to the governor.

Instances in which the Council sends fewer names most often occur on vacancies in small rural areas, where there are not many applicants.