

Daniel George

From: Mike Coons <mcoons@mtaonline.net>
Sent: Thursday, February 19, 2015 9:32 AM
To: Daniel George
Subject: Testimony SJR 3 Updated

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My name is Mike Coons from Palmer and speaking for myself.

I fully support SJR 3 .

I fully support adding members to the Judicial Counsel and that all, both lawyers and citizens must be confirmed by the Legislature! This is transparency as it should be! Also, as a voter since 1994 I have seen very little solid information on Judges to the voters prior to elections.

Over the years, the information from the Judicial Counsel has been lean and not helpful in helping me to make an informed decision on voting.

This amendment puts more citizen's than lawyers in the counsel which hopefully will add a better level of evaluation and scrutiny of the applicants to Judge seats and existing Judges. I want a counsel that will evaluate with a bias towards our liberties and freedoms as per the State and US Constitutions! That includes the applicants views as well as sitting Judges for "promotion" of their history of decisions both from opinions on the Alaska Constitution as well as enforcement of the law as per civil and criminal decisions. I will vote no, if I know any Judge who is lenient or has legislated from the bench! Sadly, the the Counsel is mute on this issue.

I want to know if a Judge is following the Alaska Constitution and the US Constitution or is legislating from the bench. Those who legislate must be voted out or not recommended to a higher court. I do hope that my fellow citizens on the Counsel will let us the voters know whom these judges are and pick judges who rule by the Constitution, Natures God and not progressive views that the Constitution is a living breathing document.

We must have a counsel that will not endorse Judges based on the lawyers in the counsel recommendations. We must have citizens who will give great scrutiny to any applicant as to their knowledge of the State Constitution and the US Constitution. We know that the law schools are not teaching the Constitution so just because a person is a lawyer does not mean they know about liberty and freedom as per the State and US Constitutions!

I'm not asking for a "Hanging Judge" evaluation of the Judges or applicants for Judges, but I do want some clear history of what these judges are doing and what the applicants may do, frankly I do not believe a counsel like we have now is doing that with the lawyers, in my opinion, swaying those determinations. This may be viewed by other speakers wrongly, but frankly perception with voters can and does become reality.

I may not be a lawyer, but I know what is right and wrong and what smells and what doesn't. I want common sense, the clear following of the Constitution, not legalese.

In closing, this past election we had three referendums that were based more on emotion than solid facts. This is a Constitutional Amendment that is and will be fully vetted and voted on by the State Legislature based on facts and the law. I want to vote for the Constitutional amendment, vote yes so that We the People can then make informed decision on facts, not emotion!

Mike Coons
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Daniel George

From: Grant Hunter <hunterpp@gci.net>
Sent: Sunday, March 01, 2015 5:01 PM
To: Sen. Bill Stoltze
Subject: SJR 3

I respectfully request that you support SJR 3 (Proposing amendments to the Constitution of the State of Alaska to increase the number of members on the judicial council; relating to the initial terms of new members appointed to the judicial council; and relating to the confirmation of members of the judicial council.)

As we all know the Alaska Supreme Court has increasingly assumed the role of an alternative legislative body in many areas of social and economic policy by creating out of thin air new legal burdens upon the purses and persons of Alaska. I refer to decisions with regard to defined benefit pension rights for time not yet worked, public sector family benefits for homosexual couples, homosexual marriage and mandatory public sector financing for abortion.

It is simply a violation of the principles of democratic accountability that the Alaska Bar Association, a private organization, has such control over judicial selection. The membership of the Alaska Judicial Council, if it is to have a role in judicial selection, should reflect a broader cross-section of the people.

SJR 3 is step in the right direction.

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