

**From:** Susan A <susanallmeroth@gmail.com>  
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## Public Testimony Opposing the Nomination of William R. Satterberg Jr. to the Alaska Supreme Court

The judiciary's credibility and effectiveness are grounded in the impartiality, ethical conduct, and professional competence of its members. This testimony presents concerns regarding the nomination of William R. Satterberg Jr. to the Alaska Supreme Court, focusing on allegations of unprofessional behavior, potential conflicts of interest, and his readiness to uphold established legal precedents.

### Allegations of Unprofessional Behavior and Hostile Work Environment

Mr. Satterberg's professional conduct has been subject to scrutiny. In the case of Uphues et al. v. Law Offices of William R. Satterberg, Jr. et al., plaintiffs alleged deprivation of civil rights under color of law pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983, naming Mr. Satterberg and his law firm as defendants. The plaintiffs claimed that Mr. Satterberg lacked a proper business license, rendering him without standing to prosecute or defend actions in Alaska courts, thereby depriving them of civil rights protection from unscrupulous business practices. They sought \$2.5 million in compensatory damages, among other remedies.

Additionally, reviews of Mr. Satterberg's law firm suggest concerns about his professional conduct. A client review on Yelp criticized the firm for allegedly inadequate research on smaller cases and high fees, describing the firm as "very money hungry" and not the best in Fairbanks.

### Potential Conflicts of Interest

In December 2024, Mr. Satterberg was appointed as a new member of the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct (ACJC). This commission is responsible for overseeing judicial conduct and ensuring accountability within the judiciary. Given Mr. Satterberg's extensive history as a practicing attorney, including his involvement in contentious legal disputes, there is a potential conflict of interest in his role on the commission. His participation could be perceived as compromising the ACJC's impartiality, especially in cases involving attorneys with whom he has had professional associations.

### Advocacy for Judicial Reform and Implications for Impartiality

Mr. Satterberg has publicly advocated for significant reforms to Alaska's judicial selection process. In his article, "Alaska Needs Judicial Selection Reform Now," he critiques the current system as politicized and proposes reforms that would grant the governor greater authority in judicial appointments, subject to legislative confirmation. While advocating for reform is within his rights, such public positions raise

concerns about his impartiality if appointed to the judiciary, especially in cases related to judicial selection or reforms.

### Readiness to Uphold Established Legal Precedents

The principle of stare decisis ensures legal stability by obligating courts to follow established precedents. Mr. Satterberg's critiques of the judicial system and his advocacy for reforms suggest a readiness to challenge existing procedures. This disposition raises concerns about his commitment to upholding legal precedents, a fundamental responsibility of a Supreme Court justice.

Given these considerations, Mr. Satterberg's nomination to the Alaska Supreme Court warrants thorough scrutiny. Allegations of unprofessional behavior, potential conflicts of interest due to his role on the ACJC, advocacy for judicial reforms that could affect his impartiality, and questions about his commitment to stare decisis raise significant concerns about his suitability for the judiciary. It is imperative that judicial nominees demonstrate unwavering commitment to ethical standards, impartiality, and respect for legal precedents to maintain public trust in our legal system.

I do not recommend his appointment

Susan Allmeroth

Two Rivers

Myself

### References

Satterberg, W. R. Jr. (2020, December 3). Alaska needs judicial selection reform now. Must Read Alaska. Retrieved from <https://mustreadalaska.com/satterberg-alaska-needs-judicial-selection-reform-now/>

Uphues et al. v. Law Offices of William R. Satterberg, Jr. et al., No. 4:19-cv-00024-SLG (D. Alaska 2019). Retrieved from <https://casetext.com/case/uphues-v-law-offices-of-satterberg>

28 U.S.C. § 455 - Disqualification of justice, judge, or magistrate judge. Retrieved from <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/28/455>

\*Note: The concerns raised are based on publicly available information and aim to ensure that the judiciary remains fair, impartial, and committed to upholding the rule of law.\*

### Public Testimony Opposing the Nomination of William R. Satterberg Jr. to the Alaska Supreme Court

The integrity of the judiciary is fundamentally anchored in the impartiality of its judges and their unwavering commitment to established legal precedents. Any deviation from these principles can erode public trust and destabilize the legal system. This testimony aims to highlight concerns regarding the nomination of William R. Satterberg Jr. to the Alaska Supreme Court, focusing on issues related to his impartiality, adherence to the doctrine of stare decisis, and his professional conduct as evidenced by past legal proceedings.

### Impartiality and Advocacy for Judicial Reform

Impartiality is a cornerstone of judicial conduct, as mandated by federal law: "Any justice, judge, or magistrate judge of the United States shall disqualify himself in any proceeding in which his impartiality might reasonably be questioned" (28 U.S.C. § 455). Mr. Satterberg has publicly criticized Alaska's current judicial selection process, labeling it as politicized and advocating for significant reforms. In his article, "Alaska Needs Judicial Selection Reform Now," he argues that the existing system does not function as intended and suggests that the process is influenced by political considerations rather than solely based on merit (Satterberg, 2020). While advocating for reform is within the rights of any citizen, Mr. Satterberg's strong stance raises concerns about his ability to remain impartial, especially if appointed to a judicial position within the very system he seeks to overhaul.

### Disposition to Overturn Stare Decisis

The doctrine of stare decisis ensures legal consistency by obligating courts to follow established precedents. Mr. Satterberg's critiques of Alaska's judicial system and his advocacy for constitutional amendments to reform judicial selection indicate a readiness to challenge and overturn established procedures (Satterberg, 2020). Such a disposition raises concerns about his commitment to upholding existing legal precedents, a fundamental responsibility of a Supreme Court justice.

### Professional Conduct and Legal Proceedings

Mr. Satterberg's professional conduct has been subject to legal scrutiny, further raising concerns about his suitability for a judicial appointment. In the case of Uphues et al. v. Law Offices of William R. Satterberg, Jr. et al., plaintiffs alleged deprivation of civil rights under color of law pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983, naming Mr. Satterberg and his law firm as defendants (Uphues v. Law Offices of Satterberg, 2019). Although the specifics of the case are complex and outcomes may vary, the involvement in such litigation underscores the necessity for thorough evaluation of Mr. Satterberg's professional ethics and conduct.

### Conclusion

Given these considerations, Mr. Satterberg's nomination to the Alaska Supreme Court warrants careful scrutiny. His public positions suggest potential biases and a willingness to challenge established legal norms, which could compromise the impartiality and stability of our judiciary. Furthermore, past legal proceedings involving his professional conduct necessitate a thorough evaluation of his suitability for a judicial role. It is crucial that nominees demonstrate unwavering commitment to impartiality, respect for legal precedents, and adherence to ethical standards to maintain public confidence in our legal system.

I do not recommend his approval and strongly oppose.

Thank you for your time and consideration  
Susan Allmeroth  
Two Rivers  
Myself

### References

Satterberg, W. R. Jr. (2020, December 3). Alaska needs judicial selection reform now. Must Read Alaska. Retrieved from [<https://mustreadalaska.com/satterberg-alaska-needs-judicial-selection-reform-now/>]

Uphues et al. v. Law Offices of William R. Satterberg, Jr. et al., No. 4:19-cv-00024-SLG (D. Alaska 2019). Retrieved from [<https://casetext.com/case/uphues-v-law-offices-of-satterberg>]

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