



THE STATE OF GEORGIA

EXECUTIVE ORDER

BY THE GOVERNOR:

WHEREAS: The quality of our system of administering justice is determined by the quality of the judicial officers elected and appointed to serve within our judicial system; and

WHEREAS: It is the responsibility and the duty of the Governor under Ga. Const. art. VI, § 7, ¶ III to appoint duly qualified persons to fill vacancies in the courts arising during the Governor's term of office; and

WHEREAS: It is essential that the Governor fills judicial vacancies with men and women of the highest capacity whom by temperament, ability and integrity will freely, impartially, and independently interpret the law and administer justice; and

WHEREAS: Judicial candidates demonstrating excellence should be drawn from a cross-section of our community, reflecting the diversity of our citizenry; and

WHEREAS: A non-partisan, non-political judicial nominating commission composed of outstanding lawyers and laypersons in aid to the discretion reposed in the Governor, drawn from all quarters of the State and a cross-section of its diverse population best ensures the highest quality of judicial appointments.

NOW, THEREFORE, BY VIRTUE OF THE POWER VESTED IN ME AS GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA, IT IS HEREBY

ORDERED: That there is created the Judicial Nominating Commission for the State of Georgia. The Commission shall make nominations to fill vacancies on all courts of record in the State. The Commission created by this order shall supersede Executive Order 10.26.21.01.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED: That the Commission shall consist of members that have demonstrable knowledge of the judicial system and experience in the needs and operation

of Georgia courts. Members who are members of the Bar shall have appropriate experience relevant with the courts as former judges, former magistrates, trial counsel, government counsel, or corporate counsel and shall be members of the State Bar of Georgia in good standing. Members who are not members of the Bar shall be familiar with the attributes that best qualify a person for appointment as a judicial officer.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED: That the Georgia Judicial Nominating Commission shall consist of members appointed by the Governor to serve at the pleasure of the Governor. All members shall be residents of the State of Georgia. Appointments shall be made with a view toward equitable geographic representation and shall reflect the diversity of the State's citizenry.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED: That in the event of a judicial vacancy, the Commission shall advertise the vacancy and elicit applications of qualified persons to fill the vacancy; meet and consider persons for submission as nominees according to merit and law and shall recommend to the Governor individuals which it finds qualified for each judiciary vacancy.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED: That all written communications by the Commission or any member with any applicant or with any person or entity concerning an applicant shall be limited to Commission stationery. No law firm or law practice letterhead stationery shall be used in connection with any such communication.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED: That the members of the State Bar of Georgia shall at all times act in accordance with professional and ethical standards set forth by the Bar. All members shall at all times act according to the highest professional and ethical standards.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED: That Mark Middleton, Esq., Vincent Russo, Esq., and the Honorable Shawn LaGrua are appointed as Co-Chairs of the Commission to serve at the pleasure of the Governor. Vincent Russo will be responsible for the record keeping and operation of the commission.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED: That the following individuals are hereby appointed as members to the Georgia Judicial Nominating Commission:

Vincent Russo

Mark Middleton

Shawn LaGrua

Michael P. Boggs

Kristi Connell

Lance Cooper

Tye Darland

Walter "Walt" Davis

Sheetal Desai

Charles E. Evans, Jr.

T. Mills Fleming

Patrick Flynn

Robert S. Highsmith, Jr.

Andrew "Drew" Hill

Soo Hong

Jamie Inagawa

Allan Kamensky

Anne Kaufold-Wiggins

Benjamin Land

Anh Le

James B. Manley, Jr.

Quentin Marlin

Harold Melton

Shondeana C. Morris

Brooke Newby

Natalie Paine

Samir J. Patel
Jonathan Pope
Haynes Studstill
Darrell Sutton
W. Ryan Teague
Pythias "Pete" Temesgen
Frank Turner, Jr.
Richard Valladares
Holly Veal
Shannon Wallace
Josh Waters
W. Thomas Worthy

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED: That members of the Commission shall serve without compensation but are entitled to receive reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties for the Commission. Such reimbursement shall be expended from funds appropriated to or otherwise available from the Office of the Governor of the State of Georgia.

Any inconsistent previous order is hereby rescinded.

This 13th day of December 2024.



GOVERNOR