

✓ *Does it really matter if I vote for judges?*

Absolutely! Judges make decisions about fundamental issues that affect all of us (family life, education, health care, housing, employment, discrimination, civil rights, public safety, etc.), and those decisions can have long-lasting impact. It is critical that our judges make fair decisions. Judges must know the law, be independent, and be free from political and economic influences. Voting for qualified judges really does protect the courts—for all of us!

✓ *How am I going to remember all this on election day?*

Prior to each election, local newspapers (including the *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Daily Southtown*, *Daily Herald* and many local community papers) will publish a summary chart of all the bar groups' recommendations regarding the judicial candidates. You may take this chart with you into the voting booth.

For detailed information on individual judges as well as the whole election process, visit our website at www.VoteForJudges.org

✓ *Want to know more?*

Go to our website to see all of the evaluations of candidates running for judge.

✓ **VoteForJudges.org**

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Don't forget to vote for judges on March 21st!



✓ **VoteForJudges.org**

Vote for
Qualified
Judges and
Protect Our
Courts





✓ *What is VoteForJudges.org?*

VoteForJudges.org is a non-partisan group, supported by many non-profit organizations to provide voter education for the upcoming judicial elections.

In Illinois, judges are elected. People will be voting for judges on March 21, 2006. Each of these candidates is running to fill a judicial vacancy.

By reading this brochure and looking at our website, you can become better informed about the people running for judge. By voting for qualified judges, you can help protect our courts.



✓ *What is a judicial election?*

The Cook County judicial system has both countywide and smaller "subcircuit" districts. Countywide judges are elected by the voters of the whole county. Once elected, the candidate can be assigned to any division of the Circuit Court. In addition, judges can be elected through subcircuit elections.

The 15 subcircuits are geographical areas that all lie within Cook County. Subcircuit candidates must reside within the geographic boundaries of the subcircuit, and they are selected by the voters of that subcircuit only. Once elected, however, the judges from the subcircuits have the same powers as judges elected countywide, and can also be placed in any division of the Circuit Court, as well.

The subcircuits were created as a response to criticisms that countywide elections resulted in an insufficient number of minorities and Republicans on the bench. In 1992, the Illinois legislature enacted legislation establishing the subcircuit system in Cook County, with the aim of increasing diversity on the bench. Each voter in Cook County will vote in judicial countywide races and in a limited number of races to fill vacancies within their subcircuit.

Lawyers and bar groups receive information about candidates' performance and recommend whether or not he or she is qualified to be a judge.

✓ *Why should I vote for judges?*

Judges make all kinds of decisions, from the very personal, such as child custody decisions, to those with much broader impact such as the nature of O'Hare expansion. The decisions that judges make affect our lives, both directly and indirectly, often for many years to come.

It is our responsibility to vote for judges we can trust to make impartial decisions based on fair consideration of the facts and law. In some cases, this means that judges may make unpopular or controversial decisions. We need to trust that our judges can make those right decisions without regard to political or economic pressure. That's why it is so important to vote for qualified people to be judges.

✓ *How could I possibly know enough to vote for all these people?*

There are at least a dozen bar groups that interview the judicial candidates and evaluate their experience and temperament. Those bar associations issue opinions about candidates' qualifications.

VoteForJudges.org

Vote for Qualified Judges and Protect Our Courts