



# Kansas Courts News Release

## *Office of Judicial Administration*

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Two are elected to Kansas Supreme Court Nominating Commission**

TOPEKA—Mikel L. Stout, a Wichita attorney, was elected chair of the Kansas Supreme Court Nominating Commission by attorneys in a statewide election.

Stout is a senior partner with Foulston Siefkin of Wichita. He succeeds Anne E. Burke, an attorney in Overland Park, who has served as chair since 2009.

Also elected an attorney member of the commission, representing the 4th Congressional District, was Gloria Farha Flentje, former senior vice president for Spirit AeroSystems in Wichita. She succeeds Jay F. Fowler, a partner with Foulston Siefkin of Wichita.

Kansas Supreme Court justices are appointed to the bench through a merit-based nomination process that Kansans voted to add to the Kansas Constitution more than 50 years ago. When there is a vacancy, the Supreme Court Nominating Commission reviews applications and interviews candidates. The commission narrows the pool to three candidates and the governor selects one to appoint as the next Supreme Court justice.

Once appointed, a Supreme Court justice stands for



Mikel L. Stout

retention by Kansas voters beginning with the first general election following one year of service. After a justice is retained by a majority vote, he or she serves a six-year term.

Douglas T. Shima, clerk of the appellate courts, recently conducted the elections for the chair and one lawyer member of the commission. Stout's and Farha Flentje's four-year terms will run from July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2021.

The Supreme Court Nominating Commission has nine members. Four lawyers representing each of the state's four congressional districts are elected by attorneys in each district. Another four nonattorney members representing each of the congressional districts are appointed by the governor. The chair is elected by attorneys in a statewide election.

When the Supreme Court Nominating Commission reviews candidates to be a Supreme Court justice, members look at the person's:

- legal and judicial experience
- educational background
- character and ethics
- temperament
- service to the community
- impartiality
- respect of colleagues

Judges and justices must follow the law and not be influenced by politics, special interest groups, public opinion, or their own personal beliefs.

Judges and justices follow a Code of Judicial Conduct that establishes standards of ethical behavior. They also take an oath of office that includes swearing to support, protect, and defend the U.S. and Kansas constitutions.

Other members of the Supreme Court Nominating Commission are:

- 1st Congressional District: David J. Rebein, Dodge City, attorney member; Linda B. Weis, Manhattan, nonattorney member.
- 2nd Congressional District: Natalie G. Haag, Topeka, attorney member; Felita R. Kahrs, Topeka, nonattorney member.
- 3rd Congressional District: Lenin V. Guerra, Olathe, attorney member; Robert Hayworth, Overland Park, nonattorney member.
- 4th Congressional District: Gary T. Mason, Maize, nonattorney member.



Gloria Farha Flentje

For more information about the Supreme Court  
Nominating Commission, go to  
[www.kscourts.org/appellate-clerk/nominating-  
commission](http://www.kscourts.org/appellate-clerk/nominating-commission).

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