

Inquirer Judicial Candidate Questionnaire

Name: **Angeles Roca**

Judicial post for which you are running: Philadelphia
Court of Common Pleas

Political Party: Democrat

1. Why are you qualified and well-suited to serve as a judge on the court for which you are running? I feel I am qualified and well-suited to serve as a judge on the Court of Common Pleas in Philadelphia for a number of reasons. First, I believe I am an asset to the City of Philadelphia. As a family law attorney and now a family court Judge, I tried many cases and in many cases I tried to mediate and make agreements for custody, support, and divorce matters so that everyone feels that they are part of the process. If elected I will continue to work in that same fashion in any courtroom where I would be assigned. I will continue treating everyone equally with respect and dignity. I come from very humble beginnings and as such I learned early in life that you must work hard to achieve success. In my years as a member of the bar, I have always strived to be honest and hardworking and I carry those traits to the bench. I believe I am fair and impartial and apply the law as indicated. I can and do uphold the integrity and independence that a Judge must maintain.

2. Did you receive a rating of “recommended” or higher from the state or local bar association? If not, why not? I have received a “Recommended” from the Philadelphia Bar Association.

3. If you are an incumbent judge, what’s a recent instance in which you acted to preserve your judicial independence? If you are an aspiring judge, how do you plan to remain independent if elected to the bench? Currently I am a Judge having been appointed by the Governor of Pennsylvania in October 2008 and confirmed by the Senate. One of the things that I do to preserve judicial independence is recuse myself from any case where I was an attorney for any of the parties before me or any case where I consulted any of the parties before me. Also, I recuse myself from any matter where any of the parties appearing before me even look familiar in any way whether socially or professionally. Of course, I recuse myself from any cases coming before me which involve any friends or family members. Moreover, since becoming a Judge in October 2008, I have recused myself from approximately 7 to 10 cases and I will continue to do so where there is even the scintilla of any appearance of impropriety.

Another example of what I do to preserve judicial independence is that I prohibit the initiation or consideration of ex parte communications concerning a pending or impending matter. I will advise anyone who approaches me to speak about any courtroom related matter that such conversation is not appropriate and will not be entertained or tolerated.



I took an Oath to be fair and impartial and I take that Oath seriously. I do and will continue to abide by the Code of Conduct for Judges.

4. *A number of Pennsylvania judges have been sanctioned for campaign activities, ex parte dealings, and other alleged misconduct. How can the state's judiciary prevent discipline scandals of the type seen recently?* I believe that the state's judiciary is one of the most regulate groups in the state and the judges recently sanctioned are the exception and not the norm however, some examples of how the state's judiciary may prevent discipline scandals are as follows:

- a. in state's where judges are elected, prior to campaigns, judicial candidates should attend education classes regarding what is or is not permission as candidates campaign to become judges;
- b. mandatory training sessions for judges;
- c. open court rooms; and
- d. Establishment of a unbiased non-partisan independent review panel for the judiciary.

5. *If you believe that gender, racial, ethnic, class or other forms of bias can infect the justice system, how will you work to keep your courtroom as bias-free as possible?* I will and do maintain a bias-free courtroom by treating everyone in the courtroom equally. Having represented the disenfranchised communities for the majority of my practice I understand the need for a bias free courtroom. I do not allow any discriminatory and/or, derogatory comments in my courtroom from staff, attorneys, litigants or anyone. I will excuse and remove anyone from my courtroom were there is even a hint of any gender, racial, ethnic, class or other forms of bias.