

# Inquirer Judicial Candidates Questionnaire

Name: **David Zellis**

Running for: Judge of the Bucks County Court of  
Common Pleas

Political Party: Republican

Campaign e-mail and Website:  
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## Questions:

### 1. **Why are you qualified and well-suited to serve as a judge on the court for which you are running?**

For twenty-four years I have been a tough, nonsensical prosecutor who has been battling in the courtroom on behalf of the people of Bucks County. I have spent my career in the court room convicting many of the most notorious murderers in the history of our county. I am a champion of victim's rights and have always demonstrated true compassion for victims of crime. My experience in the District Attorney's Office including being the First Assistant District Attorney and Chief of the Grand Jury has prepared me to make difficult decisions, the type of decisions that judges need to be able to make. Through my leadership abilities I was able to create the Bucks County Crimes Against Older Adults Task Force, and the Bucks County Network Against Domestic Abuse, both of which focus on crime prevention. I have dedicated my life to making Bucks County a safe place to live and work. That commitment to the people of Bucks County will continue as a tough, but fair and independent judge.

### 2. **Did you receive a rating of “recommended” or higher from the state or local bar association? If not, why not?**

The local bar association did not issue such a rating, but instead published the survey results of a small group of lawyers. I did not participate in the survey because I have never been a member of the bar association and my relationship with those lawyers has been adversarial in the court room. Furthermore, at a time when the public's trust in our judiciary is at a low point, I believe that it is wrong for judicial candidates to seek the approval of lawyers and to accept political contributions from lawyers who practice in Bucks County. I have chosen to restore the people's confidence in our judges and be politically independent and not owe anything to the party bosses or a small group of lawyers.

### 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?**



The Bucks County party bosses cut a back room deal to endorse three of my opponents and then told the voters of Bucks County to take it or leave it. Party bosses can not be allowed to deny the people the right to choose who their judges are going to be. I have already demonstrated my political independence by running as a candidate against the party bosses. If elected I will continue to serve the public interest just as I have done as an independent career prosecutor.

**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?**

The state's judiciary should follow my lead and establish once and for all that it is wrong for any judicial candidate to solicit or accept money from lawyers who will appear before the court.

**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?**

As a judge I will set the tone in court and make sure everyone knows that the courtroom is no place for any type of bias or prejudice. My experience representing all of the citizens of Bucks County has prepared me to be respectful, understanding and compassionate toward everyone. I will make certain that every person who comes to my court room walks away feeling that they were treated fairly.