

Inquirer Judicial Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Linda S. Judson

Running for: Commonwealth Court

Political Party: Democrat

Campaign e-mail: Linda@JudsonForJudge.com
www.JudsonForJudge.com

Questions:

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

I have a reputation for being honest, straightforward, and fair. I also have an ethic of hard work and perseverance. I obtained a nursing license and worked full time as a nurse while putting myself through college, and then worked full time in legal positions to put myself through law school.

Much of my twenty years as a practicing attorney has been relevant to Commonwealth Court. Following a clerkship in the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania, I initially focused on corporate practice, including insurance, risk management, and human relations, with a managerial emphasis on improving corporate risk programs through compliance methods, risk financing and risk mitigation.

Subsequently I specialized in workers' compensation, representing both claimants and defense. This practice has provided the opportunity for me to utilize my education and experience representing clients in the litigation of workers' compensation matters, and provide advisement to clients in the areas of risk and safety, including work environments, through review and interpretation of relevant statutory and case law. I have also done extensive teaching about the law and practices related to workers' compensation for clients and professional organizations, as well as for the Pennsylvania Bar Institute and Lorman continuing education seminars.

In addition to matters of insurance, corporate regulations, and workers' compensation, I also have extensive experience in land use and zoning, going back to my days as senior law clerk at the Allegheny County Law Department and continuing today with my position as board member and Treasurer of the Parking Authority of the City of Pittsburgh.



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

Yes, I was recommended by the Pennsylvania Bar Association in very enthusiastic terms.

“The Candidate has an impressive diversity of work and life experience as well as a strong record as an outstanding practitioner in the area of Workers' Compensation law. The Candidate has worked as a director of risk management for a large construction company, a lawyer for an international insurance brokerage, a non-paid board member and treasurer of the Pittsburgh Parking Authority and a licensed practical nurse. During the past 12 years, the Candidate has specialized in Workers' Compensation law, and she is recognized as a leading practitioner in this area. She is articulate and poised. She presents her ideas in a logical and organized manner. She has good writing skills and a good judicial temperament. She has a strong record of community involvement. The Commission believes the Candidate possesses the character, judicial temperament and skills to serve as a Commonwealth Court judge and recommends her as a candidate.”

www.pavotesmart.com

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?

As an aspiring judge, I come to this race on my own. My candidacy is not the product of backroom deals, nor am I the pick of party leaders. While I have earned the respect and support of progressive and independent Democrats, including organized labor and many of my colleagues in the legal profession, I am beholden to no one, and that is my continued goal as a judge. I am an independent, life-long Democrat who has never held a party or public office, a history of independence that I believe will well serve the people of Pennsylvania.

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?

An important component of high quality in the Pennsylvania courts is the careful and vigorous vetting of judicial candidates and the endorsement process by responsible media. Once on the bench, a judge is obligated to avoid all conflicts of interest, including but not limited to those arising from election contributions. Even the appearance of a conflict of interest is sufficient to jeopardize a finding, and thus requires recusal.

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?

It is imperative that there is diversity within the judiciary and the staff, including the legal staff (clerks). It is crucial that women play a greater role on juries, and in order to facilitate this goal, the courts should be willing to provide child care for jurors chosen to

serve. If elected, I will strive to have a staff that represents gender, ethnic and racial diversity. I will also work in support of required seminars addressing race, gender, ethnicity, and class for all judiciary and judiciary staff.