

Pennsylvania Coalition for Civil Justice Reform Judicial Candidate Questionnaire

Mary Murray

Candidate Name (Print)

8/23/17

Date



Candidate Signature

Pa. Superior Court Judge

Position Sought

1. Please describe your background and experiences that qualify you for this office. (Feel free to attach a prepared resume or biography.) For the last thirteen years I have served as a Magisterial District Judge. In that time, I can assure you that no one has appeared before me to whom their case, on that particular day, was not the most important thing in the world. I have dealt with an extraordinary wide range of cases and have seen firsthand their impact on the lives of individual citizens. In addition, I have maintained a private legal practice for more than twenty years, now largely concentrated in the area of wills and estate planning.
2. What is your general judicial philosophy? Do you believe in the concept of the "living constitution" with respect to the Pennsylvania and United States Constitutions? The "living Constitution" is a much-abused phrase implying that the plain meaning of words in the state and federal constitutions are subject to re-interpretation based on the whim of a particular judge. I do not subscribe to this belief.
3. Please identify the current U.S. Supreme Court Justice that you believe most closely reflects your judicial philosophy and explain why. I remain an admirer of Justice Clarence Thomas for his decades-long adherence to basic constitutional principals, not infrequently in the face of considerable opposition.
4. To what extent do you believe that a judge should or should not defer to the actions of the legislature? Legislation that falls within the parameters of the state and federal constitutions must be deferred to.
5. What particular problems have you detected in Pennsylvania's civil justice system? Are there reforms that you would like to see enacted or adopted as a remedy? My practice and my judicial service have been largely removed from the daily workings of complex civil litigation. It is, however, my strong view that the General Assembly has it within its power to bring real clarity to our system of civil justice.
6. Do you believe our judicial system adequately deters and penalizes frivolous litigation? If not, what reforms would you like to see? This issue is within the exclusive province of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, but I would not be opposed to the imposition of rules similar to Federal Rule 11.



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7. Do you think excessive damage awards are a problem in our courtrooms?

Unfortunately, I believe I am unable to ethically answer this question, due to the fact that this is a question that would come before the Superior Court on appeal.

8. Do you support the equal representation of plaintiff and defense counsel involved in civil litigation on the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's Procedural Rules and Evidentiary Rules Committees? **Absolutely**

9. Do you support extending the venue rule for medical liability cases in Pennsylvania Rule of Civil Procedure 1006(a.1) to cover all personal injury cases and defendants? **While these changes would have to be proposed by the Rules Committee and adopted by the Supreme Court, I see no reason that the rule could not be extended to include all personal injury cases and defendants.**

10. Please identify any endorsements your campaign has received.

Pennsylvania Pro-Life Federation, Laborers

Council of Western Pa, Life PAC, FOAC and PA AG Republicans

11. Please identify all membership organizations including bar associations, professional associations, professional societies, civic, community, charitable, religious, educational, social, political and labor organizations to which you are or have been affiliated or have provided pro bono work. **Pennsylvania, Florida, Allegheny and Beaver County Bar Associations. Member of Forest Grove Sportsman's Club, Special Court Judges Association, St. Margaret Mary Parish, Amen Corner, BPO Elks 1090, and the Airport Area Chamber of Commerce. Former member of Vectors Pittsburgh, Women's Business Network, Financial Women International, Pittsburgh Women in Commercial Real Estate and the West Hills Area Women's Club.**

12. Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a violation of any federal, state, county or municipal law, regulation or ordinance (excluding minor traffic offenses but including DUI or reckless driving)? Been the subject of a formal disciplinary proceeding as an attorney? If so, please give the particulars and the result. **NO.**



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