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Los Angeles County Bar Association Rates Qualifications of Judicial Candidates Seeking Election to the Bench

LACBA evaluates character, experience and knowledge of the law, among other attributes, to rate candidates hoping to serve on the Los Angeles Superior Court

LOS ANGELES, April 29, 2016 — The Los Angeles County Bar Association (LACBA), one of the largest metropolitan bar associations in the country, has released its 2016 Judicial Elections Evaluation Committee (JEEC) Report, which rates the qualifications of each of the 23 candidates seeking election as a judicial officer to the Los Angeles Superior Court in a contested race for the upcoming June 7 primary election. The ratings are available online at www.lacba.org.

“A majority of voters don’t realize how important it is that they vote for local judicial candidates because these are the judges who will preside over their cases if they have to go to court,” said Paul R. Kiesel, LACBA president. “Many voters are hesitant to cast their ballot for a particular candidate because they lack the information they need to make an informed decision about the qualities and attributes that make a good judge. Our goal is to help the voters of L.A. County make informed decisions.”

Jerry Abeles, chair of LACBA’s JEEC added, “There are a myriad of sites and forums where people can turn to research information about restaurants, cars, and travel destinations, but there are very few resources available where voters can look for recommendations from the legal profession about the qualifications for judicial officers. We hope that voters use LACBA’s Judicial Elections Evaluation Committee Report as a tool to help them make informed decisions, because these judges are going to issue rulings that will affect their daily lives.”

LACBA’s ratings for candidates seeking election to the Los Angeles Superior Court are:

**Superior Court Office No. 11**
- Debra R. Archuleta – Qualified
- Paul Kim – Qualified
- Jonathan Alexan Malek – Not Qualified
- Steven Schreiner – Well Qualified

**Superior Court Office No. 42**
- E. Matthew Aceves – Well Qualified
- Alicia Molina – Not Qualified
- Michael P. Ribons – Well Qualified
- Comm. Cyndy Zuzga – Well Qualified
This year’s JEEC was comprised of 29 volunteer attorneys representing a cross section of the legal community, including lawyers from the private and public sectors, sole practitioners and members of small, medium, and large law firms, prosecutors and criminal defense attorneys, as well as members of the plaintiff and defense bars. Each of the Committee members has extensive courtroom and trial experience and a firm understanding of the qualifications necessary to be an effective judicial officer.

Judicial candidates who participated in the process were rated as “Exceptionally Well Qualified,” “Well Qualified,” “Qualified,” or “Not Qualified,” based on a number of criteria, including, but not limited to, integrity and character, judgment, experience, judicial temperament, professional ability, knowledge of the law, general reputation in the community, and references, among many others.

These standards are described in the Committee’s rules as follows:

- To be “Exceptionally Well Qualified,” the candidate must possess qualities and attributes considered to be of remarkable or extraordinary superiority so the candidate is deemed fit to perform the judicial function with distinction.

- To be “Well Qualified,” the candidate must possess professional ability, experience, competence, integrity, and temperament indicative of superior fitness to perform the judicial function with a high degree of skill and effectiveness.

- To be “Qualified,” the candidate must possess professional ability, experience, competence, integrity, and temperament indicative of fitness to perform the judicial function satisfactorily.

- To be “Not Qualified,” the candidate lacks one or more of the qualities of professional ability, experience, competence, integrity, and temperament indicative of fitness to perform the judicial function satisfactorily.

About the Los Angeles County Bar Association

The Los Angeles County Bar Association (LACBA) is one of the largest voluntary metropolitan bar associations in the nation, with nearly 24,000 members. LACBA is engaged in advancing the administration of justice and meeting the professional needs of lawyers. For more information on LACBA, visit www.lacba.org.