

Why I am running for Judge:

The subcircuit judge position was created through 2005 legislation dividing the 16th Circuit into subcircuits. When the vacancy for this subcircuit was announced, I decided to run. I believe that my broad and diverse experience as a lawyer and as a public servant uniquely qualify me to continue to serve the public as a Circuit Judge.

Both my law practice and my service as township supervisor have involved the protection of the more vulnerable members of our society, such as underprivileged youth, the disabled, senior and elderly population, and the poor. My ideal assignment as Judge, if elected, would be to handle guardianship and elder law cases, juvenile cases, children's abuse and neglect cases, domestic abuse and orders of protection, drug court, and other cases involving protection of victims and vulnerable people.

Why I am the best candidate for the job:

I have been an attorney in private practice in Aurora for 26 years. I have also served as township supervisor for an active township--Aurora Township--for the last 11 of those 26 years. Both my law practice and my public service have been very active, and have kept me very busy and involved in the community.

An attorney in Aurora since 1981, I enjoyed practicing with my father, J. Robert Murphy, in our Aurora office on Lake Street until 2004. My dad continues to practice full-time from his office in Geneva, and he and I maintain an "of counsel" relationship. I have continued as a sole practitioner in Aurora.

I have maintained a broad general practice, including civil litigation, personal injury, probate, chancery, real estate, landlord/tenant, divorce, estate planning, business and construction law, and municipal law.

I have also served for the past 11 years as Aurora Township supervisor. Aurora Township is one of the more vital township governments among about 1400 townships in Illinois. In the role of supervisor, I have managed a full time staff of 25 and part time/seasonal staff of over 60.

My roots in this town go as deep or deeper than any of the other candidates. That is important because the new subcircuit position is a resident position, and the judge who is elected must reside here and should relate to the community. There are a number of candidates who do not have such strong ties to the community. One of the candidates, although he has lived in Aurora for several years, has maintained his private law practice in Batavia, where he grew up. Another of the candidates grew up and attended schools in Sandwich, and moved to Aurora a few years ago. Another candidate only 2 years ago moved from DuPage County into this subcircuit section of Aurora. A fifth candidate is renting an address in the subcircuit because his house for many years, although close, is outside the subcircuit.

I also have broad general practice experience. Some of the other candidates have been involved in only a limited area of the law. For instance, there are 2 candidates who have practiced only criminal defense their entire careers.

Another candidate has practiced in only 1 courtroom his entire career--branch court prosecutor for traffic tickets.

This is a primary election involving 5 candidates on the Democratic ballot and 1 candidate on the Republican ballot. There are at least 3 candidates who have

never been active in their announced party, until this subcircuit position became available.

To summarize the contrasts between me and the other candidates: I have broader experience in more areas of the law. I have contributed more to the community. Some of my opponents have never been active in the bar associations or continuing legal education. Some of them have only become Democrats in the past year or two in order to pursue this opportunity. Some of them have only marginal or recent connections to the subcircuit, with a couple of them moving into the subcircuit only recently.

I value honesty, civility, knowledge of the law, and diligence. If elected, I will ask for and expect preparation, civility and courtesy from attorneys and litigants, and I will hold myself to those values, as well. If elected, I will promote measures to ensure equal access to justice for all, regardless of economic or social status. The litigation processes should be more streamlined, for quicker resolution. Most low and moderate income people and families cannot afford attorneys. Judges and attorneys should work to promote alternatives to litigation, and to expand or improve mediation and mandatory arbitration. I will support all programs providing pro bono, free and low-cost legal services for low and moderate income citizens, especially those who are vulnerable--seniors, those with physical or mental disabilities, minors, homeless, and poor.

This new subcircuit designation provides an opportunity to the candidates and the eventual winner to educate the local area about the judicial system, and job opportunities and career paths that are available in the criminal and civil justice system. The subcircuit area covers 2 local school systems with high percentages of minority students. There is only one minority judge in the entire 16th Circuit (Kane, Kendall, DeKalb Counties) currently. Having a "home" subcircuit judge will open doors and opportunities in this community to relate to students and to encourage their pursuit of legal and associated careers. Efforts to increase the numbers of minority attorneys and judges have to start early--in the middle schools and high schools. If elected, I will regularly speak to and mentor for students and youth groups at the schools, the churches and the community centers.

Being a fair and impartial judge and making decisions that affect and change people's lives are awesome responsibilities. I respect the job done by the lawyers and judges I know. I believe the 16th Circuit judges, both Circuit Judges and Associate Judges, are an extremely bright and competent group. I hope to join their ranks and if I do, I will look to them for guidance and example.