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FW: Important Judicial races: My suggestions

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Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2014 7:10 PM

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Fear of Failure is followed by the Panic of Success.

From: Rep. Ruth Samuelson [mailto:Rep._Ruth_Samuelson@mail.vresp.com]

Sent: Friday, October 17, 2014 11:13 AM

To: jayealexander@aol.com

Subject: Important Judicial races: My suggestions



Capitol Commentary

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October 17, 2014

Election information

Charlotte, NC

Regardless of where you stand on the issues, the events of the past few weeks serve as a compelling reminder of the power that our judges wield today. First, with the stroke of a pen, **one federal judge was able to overturn the will of the majority in North Carolina voters**, which voted overwhelmingly in favor of traditional marriage just last year. Second, in the challenge to election law changes, **three federal appeals court judges would have blocked the common-sense voting safeguards passed this year by elected state legislators**, had the U.S. Supreme Court not stepped in to stop them.

I hope that these events also serve as a reminder of the importance of **voting – which begins next Thursday, Oct. 23, at early voting locations throughout North Carolina**. (See the end of this newsletter for a link to specific details.)

Control of the U.S. Senate, which has the power to confirm (or reject) the president's federal court

judicial nominees, is up for grabs this year and North Carolina is an important battleground state. While I am optimistic that my legislative colleague **Thom Tillis** will prevail, the polls right now show the race is extremely close. **Every vote will count!**

But I want to focus this newsletter on our important judicial races on the ballot this year. The job of a judge is to interpret and apply the law as passed by legislators as long as those laws are constitutional. It is not the job of a judge to rule on whether or not they like the law as passed or to change the interpretation to suit their preferences.

While the recent marriage and voting issues decisions were made by appointed federal judges, unfortunately there's plenty of recent history to show that some elected state judges also have the tendency to legislate from the bench. The good news is that there are some excellent jurists to select from this year.

My picks include:

- **Mark Martin** for N.C. Supreme Court Chief Justice. Mark has the experience and know-how to lead the court. He also has the endorsement of five former chief justices – both Democrat and Republican.
- **Bob Hunter, Eric Levinson** and **Mike Robinson** for Associate Supreme Court Justice. All three have shown themselves to be smart, even-handed, who always act with impartiality.
- Among the 19 candidates seeking one of the state Court of Appeals seats you'll see on the ballot, **John Tyson** is the one I know personally. He is a person of integrity and would be a good pick to continue his work on the bench. Others I know strongly agree with this endorsement.
- For the other three Court of Appeals seats on the ballot, **Bill Southern, Donna Stroud** and **Paul Holcombe** are solid choices.
- In my state Superior Court district – 26B – I support **Lisa Bell** and **John Bowers** for the two posts on the ballot.
- Most of the District Judge races in District 26 are uncontested, but I hope you'll support **Casey Viser** if you live in this area. **Sean Smith** and **Matt Osman** are strong unopposed candidates.

Toward the end of this year's very long ballot in Mecklenburg County, you'll see several referenda on which you'll be asked to make a decision. **I endorse the statewide constitutional amendment** – placed on the ballot by an overwhelming, bipartisan majority in the state legislature – regarding a person's ability to waive their right to a jury trial. On the other referenda, I know that reasonable people can disagree on these issues and I hope you'll make an informed choice before you go to the polls.

Early voting will be available at more sites and for extended weekday hours this year, which should make it easier for everyone – especially working folks – to vote. The [state](#) and [Mecklenburg County elections board websites](#) have good information on times and locations. If you have any questions about candidates, please don't hesitate to contact me at ruth@ruthsamuelson.com.

In your service,

Ruth

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