

OPENING STATEMENT OF MARK T. GOULD

Good afternoon, Chairman McDonald, Chairman Lawlor and members of the Judiciary Committee.

My name is Mark Gould, and it is truly a pleasure to appear before you. I am both honored and humbled to be considered for a position as a judge on the Connecticut Superior Court. I want to thank Governor Rell for putting my name before you. I also want to thank the Committee for the time and effort it commits to this important task. I also want to thank the many fine, talented judges, attorneys, lay persons, staff, family and friends who have assisted me in my life and in my career. I am also honored to be here with three nominees who represent the very best of our profession.

I have been blessed to have learned from, been mentored by and, most importantly, raised by those who have taught me not only what it means to be a good lawyer, but what it means to be a fair, just and good person.

I was born in Westerly, RI in 1955. I grew up in Mystic, the only child of two strong, independent parents who taught me early on the value of treating people with dignity and respect and to value each interaction, no matter how small.

I may well have been one of the original "latch key" kids, since both of my parents worked full-time out of the home, as my mother used to proudly say, pretty much from the day I was brought home from the hospital. My mother was the business manager at Mystic Seaport, and my father a Greyhound bus driver. For that reason, at least during weekdays, I was watched and guided by my grandmother, who actually was the first person to teach me how to both throw and hit a curve ball.

From the earliest days that I can remember, both of my parents instilled in me the values that continue to guide me today- personal responsibility and humility, respect for all others, regardless of stature or level in life, the importance of education, and most importantly, the concept of public service, of giving back, and to, others.

I can still hear my mother saying "you owe." Those who give of themselves, without expecting anything in return, know what she meant with those words, and I have heard them as my guide throughout my life. She not only talked the talk, but walked the walk, frequently hand knitting Cardigan and fishermen's sweaters and handing them out to homeless on the streets of Norwich and New London, sitting on the board of the NAACP in New London in the early 60s, and working in various soup kitchens, homeless shelters and group homes.

I graduated from Stonington High School in 1973. In 1976, while I was a junior at college, my father passed away after a lengthy illness. I attended The University of Connecticut, from where I graduated in 1977. While at UConn, I became involved with the campus radio station, became a disk jockey, sports editor of the school newspaper, the Daily Campus, and also did radio play-by-play and color commentary for UConn basketball games, starting a lifelong love affair with the Huskies.

After graduating from college, I worked for various newspapers and radio stations in New England and New York, but I always had a dream to go to law school and become a lawyer. I attended Lewis & Clark Law School in Portland, Oregon, and graduated in 1983.

Upon graduating from law school, I returned to Connecticut, since my mother was alone here. It turned out to be the best decision I ever made because, upon my return, I met my wife, Jan, to whom I owe everything that has happened to me since then. She continues in a long line of strong, independent women who have deeply influenced my life.

I joined a New Haven law firm, Del Sole & Del Sole, and was exposed to litigation for the first time, starting yet another love affair, that of being in court, on my feet, arguing cases on behalf of my clients. I was named a partner in that firm after four years. I then transferred my practice to Fazzone, Nuzzo & Baillie in Cheshire, where I worked for five years, the last two as a partner.

I then changed direction a bit, accepting a position as senior trial counsel with Liberty Mutual's staff counsel office in New Haven. I left there in 2002, opening my own solo practice, before joining with my current partner, Larry Greenberg, in New Haven in 2006.

For almost 24 years, I have had the privilege to work with and learn from some of the finest judges and attorneys in the State. My practice has centered on civil trial litigation, where I have represented individuals, large corporations, and small businesses. I have also handled a number of GA motor vehicle, family and housing matters for my clients. I have tried approximately 40 jury cases to verdict in just about every judicial district in the state. In addition, I have a significant arbitration and mediation practice, and have worked for approximately six years as both an arbitrator and a mediator in the New Haven and Bridgeport courts.

I am an adjunct professor of law at Quinnipiac University in Hamden, where I have been on the faculty for 13 years. I also lecture and write extensively on various legal and non-legal topics.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the practice of law, have found it very rewarding to assist people in resolving their legal disputes, and have found that there is always something new to learn, some new challenge every day. This dynamic has always kept me invigorated, excited and enthused about the law and its important place in our society.

I have always expressed one crucial tenet throughout my career. That is, no matter how successful I have been, the practice of law has not been about me. It's been about being of service to people, trying to ease their concerns and qualms about a system that, while is there to serve them, may well intimidate them, and, in time, to help them resolve their differences in an atmosphere of respect and dignity that leaves them with the feeling that the legal system, and its representatives, starting with me, treated them fairly and equally. I have always tried to follow that philosophy as an attorney, and would do so as a judge of the Superior Court.

Personally, Jan and I have lived in North Haven for about 15 years, and remain active in the community, continuing a lifelong pursuit that started in high school, when I became involved with Big Brothers and, in and after college, when I taught in Literacy Volunteers. Currently, I am

a member of the North Haven Inland Wetlands Commission and serve as an Ambassador with the Quinnipiac Chamber of Commerce. My mother passed away from breast cancer, so I frequently do volunteer work for the Susan G. Komen Foundation.

Over the years, I have gained great satisfaction from volunteer service to our community, and, after 24 years in legal practice, I continue to make public service my overriding vocation. For someone who loves the law and loves being in the courtroom, I can think of no better public service than being a judge. I am truly humbled by my nomination, the opportunities it presents and my appearance before this Committee. I assure you that if confirmed I will perform the duties of a judge diligently, fairly and humbly.

Thank you again for your time and consideration, and I will be happy to answer any of your questions.