

JAMES GINOCCHIO

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Good Afternoon, Senator Looney and Representative Janowski, members of the Executive & Legislative Nominations Committee. It is a great honor to appear before this committee and it is a great honor to be nominated by Governor Rell to be a member of the Judicial Review Council.

I would like begin by telling you something about my background and my experience as an attorney and as a superior court judge.

I am originally from New York, but after graduation from Fairfield University in 1972, where I received a bachelors degree in Political Science, I became a permanent resident of the State of Connecticut.

In 1978, I was accepted in to the newly formed Law School at the University of Bridgeport and graduated from that institution in 1981.

In September of 1982, I joined the Law Firm of Paul M. Tymniak in Fairfield, Connecticut. As a new attorney, I was exposed to a general practice of law with an emphasis on real estate, personal injury and criminal law. Paul was a great mentor and a lifelong friend.

In 1983, I made a difficult decision and left private practice to pursue a career in the Public Defender's Office. I was assigned to G.A # 20 Superior Court in Norwalk and within two years I was promoted to the position of Supervisory Assistant Public Defender. Not only was I handling a large criminal caseload, I was responsible for managing a staff consisting of three attorneys, one investigator, two secretaries as well as student interns and volunteers. The three most invaluable traits that I had learned as a supervisor and an attorney were the following: (1) to listen without distraction, (2) to be fair to all sides and (3) and most importantly, don't be afraid to make a decision.

In 2001, I was appointed to be a Judge of the Superior Court. My first assignment was Danbury Superior Court which was a block assignment. There I was responsible for hearing a broad range of cases that included criminal (Part A and Part B), housing, civil, family and administrative appeals.

After Danbury, I was assigned to Waterbury Superior Court where I sat for approximately four years. For the first two years, I presided over community court, criminal arraignments and the criminal trial docket. In the last two in Waterbury, I sat in juvenile court and presided over the child protection docket.

In 2006, I was assigned to the criminal jury docket at G.A# 2, Bridgeport Superior Court. In one term, I presided over seventeen jury trials that went to verdict. The following year, I was appointed Presiding Judge.

Currently, I am the assistant administrative judge serving the Judicial District of Litchfield. Here, my primary responsibility is the management of the criminal docket which includes negotiating and trying cases. I am also responsible for presiding over family and civil matters.

I believe that my professional achievements and my life experiences will make me a valuable member of the Judicial Review Council. As a public defender, I have listened to the plight of thousands of clients, many of whom were at the lowest point in their lives. I have always tried to be patient, understanding and compassionate. As a supervisor of an office, I encountered many difficult personnel issues which required a great deal of patience and understanding, and in some cases I had to make difficult decisions which affected the lives of others. As a judge I have learned to listen to all sides, to be fair and impartial, and to never be afraid to make a tough decision.

I thank you for time and consideration and would welcome any questions you may have.