

Proposed testimony: Attorney Richard T. Meehan, Jr. Esq., nominee--Chair, Judicial review Council

Good day Senator Duff, Representative Janowski, Senator Kane, Representative Buck-Taylor and members of the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee. My name is Attorney Richard T. Meehan, Jr and it is an honor and privilege to be appointed as Chair of the Judicial Review Council by Governor Dannel P. Malloy.

My sincere thanks to this committee for the opportunity to appear before you to speak to my desire to serve on the JRC

I am the senior partner in the Bridgeport law firm of Meehan, Meehan & Gavin, born and raised in Bridgeport. I attended the University of Notre Dame and UCONN law. My wife Kathy and I have been married for 45 years, with five sons, and 11 grandchildren. I served as a law clerk to the late Supreme Court Justice Herbert MacDonald then joined my dad in the practice of law. I served for four years as an Alderman in Bridgeport, three of which as Council President. I am an avid golfer, boater and fly fisherman.

I joined my dad in 1975 in what was then exclusively a criminal trial practice. In 1979 he was appointed as a Superior Court judge but came back to the practice two years later missing the work that he loved as a trial lawyer.

My practice evolved into both civil and criminal trial work. I am a board certified criminal and civil trial specialist and serve as part of the faculty of the National Board of Trial Advocacy writing and grading certification exams in both specialties. I served as an adjunct professor for three years at Quinnipiac Law. I am proud to have an AV rating from Martindale Hubbell for now 27 years; as well as Fellowship in the American College of Trial Lawyers, the International Academy of Trial Lawyers, the Litigation Counsel of America, Trial Lawyers Honorary Society, the American College of Board Certified Attorneys, and the American Board of Trial Advocates. I have tried over 70 cases to verdict and participated as appellate counsel in over 22 appeals. My practice is statewide, and consists of state and federal criminal defense work, plaintiff's personal injury litigation with a concentration in plaintiff's dental malpractice and commercial litigation.

I have served as the interim chair since July. I am a firm believer in accountability and transparency in the operation of our justice system. It is important that the system's integrity be maintained by vigilant watchdogs who understand the importance of the Canons of Judicial Conduct. While I have great respect for our judges I am also not intimidated by judges. I have learned there is a respectful way to disagree with the court.

Since joining the JRC I have seen firsthand the issues that our judges face on a daily basis, especially in our criminal court and family court, the source of the great majority of complaints. There is a balance that judges need to strike between accommodating pro se litigants who, either by choice or necessity, cannot afford counsel, while adhering to the rules of practice.

I have had the opportunity to get to know the committee members who presently serve. Our discussions have been lively, and we have conducted the business of the JRC in an efficient fashion, carefully respecting the positions of the complainants, as well as the judges. Presently, we are studying how we can make the process of the receipt, investigation and review of complaints more streamlined and better able to utilize current technology. To that end we have established a relationship with Shelby Brown from OGA who is committed to helping us with our limited budgetary resources keep the process working smoothly.

In closing I believe that my 40 years as a trial attorney have provided me with the ability to understand both the concerns of those who must access our justice system as well as the judges called to serve it. I want to thank you for giving me a chance to tell you about myself and I am happy to answer any questions the committee may have.