THE DISTRICT COURT

JOSEPH CRAIGEN OSTER
Chief Judge

MARK A. FRATARCANGELI
District Judge

FOR THE 40th DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN

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CHIEF JUSTICE MAURA D. CORRIGAN

April 3, 2003

Maura D. Corrigan, Chief Justice
Michigan Supreme Court
Cadillac Place, 3034 West Grand Boulevard
Suite 8-500
Detroit, MI 48202-6034

Dear Chief Justice Corrigan:

After reading an article entitled "Court seeks public input on campaign conduct proposal," published in the Macomb County Legal News on March 21, 2003, we are writing to state our disapproval of the proposed amendment to Canon 7 of the Michigan Code of Judicial Conduct.

The proposed rule, which would require candidates for judicial office to use their first names, or a commonly-used name, in advertising, lawn signs and written campaign materials, would not only be burdensome, but is unnecessary, and would hinder the creative element used when designing logos and slogans. The general public has ample opportunity to become familiarized with full legal names when reading local and county editions of newspapers that thoroughly cover all of the personal information of the candidates. Voting ballots clearly designate this information, as well.

The stipulation that the first name of the candidate be at least one-third the size of the last name would be confusing to printing companies, require additional expense and scrutiny, and could open the door for disqualification of candidates simply because of technicalities on advertisements. Such a requirement would also pose impractical restrictions on those many Macomb County residents with long surnames.

We hope that you will carefully consider this amendment and find that it is not in the best interest of either the citizens or those seeking judicial offices.

Very truly yours,

Joseph Craigen Oster
Chief Judge

Mark A. Fratarcangeli
District Judge