

LIBERTY CITY LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER DEMOCRATIC CLUB

2009 JUDICIAL PRIMARY ELECTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Name Linda S. Judson Office Sought Judge of the
Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania Date April 10, 2009

1) What is your experience with the LGBT community both generally and/or professionally?

The LGBT community is integrated into my life. Several of my co-workers, family and friends are members of the LGBT community, and discussions of their issues are part of my everyday experience. As a nurse, I cared for patients undergoing gender reassignment procedures at Shadyside Hospital, the first facility in the state to perform such procedures. The photographer for my campaign is an outstanding lesbian artist and friend. Professionally, I have, pro bono, written co-habitation agreements for GLBT couples who, unfortunately are denied other legal recourses to legitimize their relationships in Pennsylvania.

2) How have you advanced, through professional and personal achievements, the rights of the LGBT community, racial and ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities?

As an attorney, I have drafted co-habitation agreements. I have been an advocate in the work place for the rights and respect of LGBT co-workers and the rights of racial and ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities.

2) Do you support the rights of LGBT people to the following:

- a. Marriage? **Yes**
- b. Civil Unions? **Yes**
- c. Domestic Partnership? **Yes**
- d. Second-parent adoption? **Yes**
- e. Protection from workplace discrimination? **Yes**
- f. Protection from housing discrimination? **Yes**
- g. Protection from acts of violence based on their sexual orientation or gender identity? **Yes**

3) Do you consider transgender rights a civil rights issue? Explain your answer.

Yes. Particularly in light of the discrimination directed toward the transgendered, civil rights legislation is an important aspect of legal protection against wrongs and injustices.

4) How should a judge support public accommodations for transgender individuals appearing before them or otherwise within the criminal justice system?

Everyone, including the LGBT community, should enjoy the rights and protections afforded under the law, and as a judge I will support those rights afforded to all individuals, including the LGBT community.

5) LGBT youth sometimes act out because of harassment at school or in the home due to their gender/sex identity. When ADAs prosecute cases against these members of our community, what will you do to prepare your staff to be sensitive to their issues? Additionally, LGBT youth who spend time in juvenile detention facilities face many dangers. What alternative sentences might you seek in their cases?

These are not cases that come before the Commonwealth Court. In general, however, staff sensitization begins at the hiring stage, and continues with diligent management, both human resources skills which I have developed through experience. The nature and quality of juvenile detention is of particular concern to me, and the issues are exacerbated regarding LGBT youth. The legal system needs to account for special needs for house detention, and qualified and trained oversight.

6) What has been the general nature of your practice and particular areas of concentration? Please describe any changes throughout the years?

My professional experience makes me exceptionally qualified to serve on the Commonwealth Court. My first job after passing the Pennsylvania Bar in 1990 was working as a clerk for the Commonwealth Court, which gave me insight into the "bridge building" between judges that is a necessary part of the process of the Commonwealth Court. Subsequently I worked for an international brokerage company, obtained my insurance agent's license and developed a sound business knowledge in the area of insurance regulation. Insurance regulatory matters and workers' compensation both come before Commonwealth Court. I then went to work as the Risk Manager and Director of Insurance for one of the top 100 construction companies in the U.S., where I continued to strengthen my knowledge in insurance regulations, workers' compensation, and unemployment compensation, all matters that come before Commonwealth Court. Subsequently, I focused my practice on workers' compensation. Additionally, I am a board member of the Pittsburgh Parking Authority, which is an unpaid position, currently serving my fourth year of a five year term. I am the Treasurer of the Authority and serve on the Budget, Audit, and Finance Committees overseeing 113 million dollars in assets. The Pittsburgh Parking Authority is constantly involved with matters of land use, zoning and development of its property assets, and as Treasurer I am intricately involved in these matters. Appeals involving land use and zoning come before the Commonwealth Court.

7) Describe a few of the most significant cases you have litigated. Please give a summary of the substance of the cases, the citations if available, and why you believe they were significant.

As an attorney I am most proud of those cases in which I represented the party that seemingly had little chance of success, but whose cause was worthy. I was able to give those persons their day in court. I have worked with a wide range of clients over twenty years of practice and all of my cases have been important to me, and more significantly, to the clients I have represented. Judges should always understand the importance of respect for those who are having their day in court.

8) State briefly why you are seeking the Democratic nomination to be a judge in Philadelphia, and what qualities you believe you possess that would serve you especially well if you were elected to the Court.

I am seeking the Democratic nomination for judge of the Commonwealth Court, a state position.

The knowledge I have obtained during twenty years of practice in the areas of workers' compensation, unemployment compensation, labor matters, insurance regulation, as well as zoning and land use provide experience in the areas of law that are most frequently heard by the Commonwealth Court. I am seeking this position because my skills and experience match the needs of the court.

9) What are the most pressing needs of reform in our judicial system in your opinion?

The Commonwealth judicial system has an obligation for the timely processing of cases and for the ethical quality of its judges. There are clearly instances where the Commonwealth has not always met these obligations.

10) For what organizations have you done pro-bono work?

**Past board member, Marion Plaza, a housing facility for the low-income elderly and disabled. (As a nurse, I worked in a facility for the developmentally and socially challenged.)
Board member and Treasurer, Pittsburgh Parking Authority.
Therapy Dogs International.**

11) Do you support a woman's right to choose?

Yes. All decisions regarding a woman's body, in all cases, should be hers alone, in consultation with her physician.

12) Have you ever been sanctioned for any alleged breach of ethics or professional conduct by any court, administrative agency, bar association, disciplinary committee, judicial conduct committee, or other professional group? If so, please explain the nature of the sanction.

No

13) Have you been recommended by the Philadelphia Bar Association?

I am running for a state-wide position, and did not go before the Philadelphia Bar Association. I am recommended by the Pennsylvania Bar Association. Here is what they said:

"The Candidate has an impressive diversity of work and life experience as well as a strong record as an outstanding practitioner in the area of Workers' Compensation law. The Candidate has worked as a director of risk management for a large construction company, a lawyer for an international insurance brokerage, a non-paid board member and treasurer of the Pittsburgh Parking Authority and a licensed practical nurse. During the past 12 years, the Candidate has specialized in Workers' Compensation law, and she is recognized as a leading practitioner in this area. She is articulate and poised. She presents her ideas in a logical and organized manner. She has good writing skills and a good judicial temperament. She has a strong record of community involvement. The Commission believes the Candidate possesses the character, judicial temperament and skills to serve as a Commonwealth Court judge and recommends her as a candidate."

Please return by Friday April 3rd via e-mail to matt@libertycity.org

Or via mail to:

Liberty City Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club

C/o Matthew Woodcock

2302 Fitzwater Street, #1

Philadelphia, PA 19146