

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMISSION
ON JUDICIAL DISABILITIES AND TENURE**
515 FIFTH STREET, N.W., BUILDING A, ROOM 246
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001
(202) 727-1363

March 30, 2016

The Honorable Barack H. Obama
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Re: Evaluation of the Honorable Maurice A. Ross

Dear Mr. President:

The fifteen-year term of the Honorable Maurice A. Ross, an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, expires on May 30, 2016. He is seeking reappointment to another term.

Pursuant to Section 433(c) of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act, 87 Stat. 744, as amended by the District of Columbia Judicial Efficiency and Improvement Act of 1986, P.L. 99-573, 100 Stat. 3228, the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure (“the Commission”) hereby submits this evaluation of Judge Ross’s performance during his present term of office and his fitness for reappointment. Section 433(c) provides:

Not less than six months prior to the expiration of his term of office, any judge of the District of Columbia courts may file with the Tenure Commission a declaration of candidacy for reappointment. If a declaration is not so filed by any judge, a vacancy shall result from the expiration of his term of office and shall be filled by appointment as provided in subsections (a) and (b). If a declaration is so filed, the Tenure Commission shall, not less than sixty days prior to the expiration of the declaring candidate’s term of office, prepare and submit to the President a written evaluation of the declaring candidate’s performance during

his present term of office and his fitness for reappointment to another term. If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring candidate to be well qualified for reappointment to another term, then the term of such declaring candidate shall be automatically extended for another full term, subject to mandatory retirement, suspension, or removal. If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring candidate to be qualified for reappointment to another term, then the President may nominate such candidate, in which case the President shall submit to the Senate for advice and consent the renomination of the declaring candidate as judge. If the President determines not to so nominate such declaring candidate, he shall nominate another candidate for such position only in accordance with the provisions of subsections (a) and (b). If the Tenure Commission determines the declaring candidate to be unqualified for reappointment to another term, then the President shall not submit to the Senate for advice and consent the renomination of the declaring candidate as judge and such judge shall not be eligible for reappointment or appointment as a judge of a District of Columbia court.

The Commission reserves the term “well qualified” for those judges whose work product, legal scholarship, dedication, efficiency, and demeanor are exceptional on the bench, and the candidate’s performance consistently reflects credit on the judicial system. The Commission will determine a judge is “qualified” if he or she satisfactorily performs the judicial function or, if there are negative traits, they are overcome by strong positive attributes. A finding of “unqualified” means the Commission has found the judge to be unfit for judicial service.

Judge Ross filed a timely declaration of candidacy for reappointment with the Commission on November 23, 2015. In evaluating Judge Ross’s qualifications for reappointment, the Commission carefully reviewed the comprehensive written statement the Judge submitted which discussed his service on the Court, and his contributions to the community during the past 15 years. The Commission also considered a selection of judicial

opinions, orders, and findings of fact authored by Judge Ross concerning a variety of criminal, civil, family, and juvenile cases.

The Commission reviewed a statement from Judge Ross's physician attesting to his "excellent" health. The Judge's time reports and annual financial statements were reviewed as was the Commission's complaint file concerning the Judge, which contained nothing that would preclude his automatic reappointment. The Commission interviewed persons concerning Judge Ross's qualifications and performance, including Court personnel who had worked with the Judge, and attorneys who regularly had appeared before him.

A review of Judge Ross's appellate record indicates few reversals. As part of his submission, the Judge included a selection of Court of Appeals opinions in which he was affirmed. These cases, ranging from complicated felony matters to commercial property disputes, concerned very interesting legal issues and demonstrated Judge Ross's ability to deal with complex legal and factual issues.

Judge Ross met with the Commission on March 9, 2016, to discuss his reappointment, including the information and materials the Commission had received during the course of its evaluation. Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield met with the Commission that same day, and provided additional information pertinent to Judge Ross's reappointment. The Chief Judge endorsed Judge Ross's continued service on the bench and complimented him for being "very efficient", during his present term of office.

During his tenure, Judge Ross has served in most of the Divisions of the Superior Court. His first assignment in 2001 was to the D.C. Traffic Branch for a six-month stint, which was followed by an assignment to a Misdemeanor Trial Calendar. In 2002 Judge Ross was assigned

to a Felony II Trial Calendar where he presided over drug distribution, gun possession, stolen vehicles, and failure to appear in Court cases. Simultaneous with this assignment, Judge Ross, as did all Superior Court judges at that time, accumulated a docket of 71 abuse and neglect cases. This was before the Family Court was established. Judge Ross had to conduct review hearings for each case and make difficult decisions about what was best for the child and the family, in addition to his Felony II assignment. Judge Ross was assigned to the Domestic Violence Unit for the calendar year 2015, during which time he presided over criminal misdemeanor domestic violence cases. From January 2006 to December 2009, he was assigned to a Civil II Calendar managing a caseload of matters concerning personal injury, breach of contract, real property, and discrimination. One week designations in the Landlord and Tenant Branch were also a part of this assignment. Following Civil II, Judge Ross presided over a Juvenile Calendar in the Family Court, with a docket of approximately 300 children who were either awaiting trial on criminal charges, awaiting sentencing, on probation, or committed to the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services. From 2013 to the present, Judge Ross has returned to a Civil II Calendar.

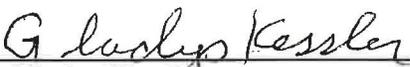
The activities of Judge Ross on the Court go beyond presiding over cases. He co-chaired the Subcommittee on Juvenile Justice and has been a member of several Court Committees, namely, the Child Abuse and Neglect Committee, the Judicial Education Committee, the Technology Committee which assisted the D.C. Courts with the expansion and improvement of the use of technology throughout the Court system, and the Building and Grounds Committee that supervised the construction of the new D.C. Court of Appeals Courthouse and the various renovations of the Moultrie Courthouse.

Judge Ross's extra judicial activities include his membership in the National Bar Association and his membership and very active participation in the Washington Bar Association Judicial Council. He has participated in numerous programs and meetings of several Bar groups in the city over the past 15 years. In addition, Judge Ross has been very dedicated to community service work through his involvement with various youth sports leagues in the city and at the local schools his children have attended.

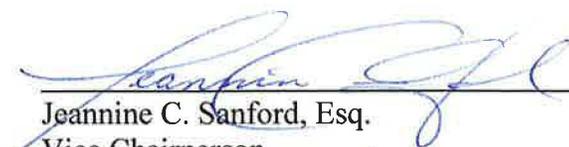
In light of Judge Ross's hard work, his dedication to the Court, and his abiding desire to do a good job for the citizens of this city, it is the view of the Commission that Judge Ross should continue his judicial service. For all these reasons, the Commission finds Judge Ross well qualified for reappointment, and his term shall be automatically extended for a full term of fifteen years from May 30, 2016.

Respectfully submitted,

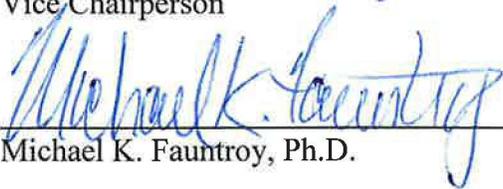
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMISSION ON
JUDICIAL DISABILITIES AND TENURE



Hon. Gladys Kessler
Chairperson



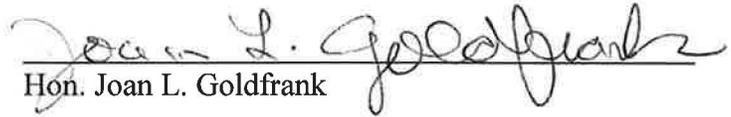
Jeannine C. Sanford, Esq.
Vice Chairperson



Michael K. Fauntroy, Ph.D.

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cc: The Honorable Maurice A. Ross