

Network Supports Tradition of Balanced, Bipartisan Court

3/20/12

Following a press conference on judicial appointments today at the State Capitol Building, Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey Director of Policy and Advocacy Staci Berger issued the following statement:

"New Jersey has a unique image. We have certain customs and ways of doing things – like jug handles, all-night diners and, for better or worse, the Jersey Shore. We also have a 65 year tradition of a balanced, bi-partisan Supreme Court.

"NJ's governors have maintained a consistent balance when nominating justices to the Supreme Court. Governor Christie has ended this historic and fair practice by nominating individuals who have been members only of his own political party. Introducing partisan politics to our Supreme Court sets New Jersey on dangerous and divided path.

"Our court, whether or not one always agrees with its decision, is widely respected for its temperance and impartial nature. Stacking the Court with members and supporters of one political party threatens the ability of our state to have three separate, but equal branches of government. The authors of our modern constitution opted to have our judges be nominated by the Governor and approved by the Senate. They chose to have the Court be insulated from the politics of the day, and not be subject to a popular vote.

"By appointing only those members who share a party affiliation with him, Governor Christie is injecting politics where none has been before. The next Governor could do the same thing, and then we are forever locked into a struggle over partisan court appointees instead of having an impartial Court that can weigh critical issues facing our state.

"We urge members of the Senate Judiciary, of both parties, to resist this effort to undo our court's independence and to preserve the future of our state by rejecting these nominees."

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