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COMMITTEE FOR INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY FORMED TO PROTECT TENNESSEE JUDICIAL SYSTEM AGAINST LEGISLATIVE THREAT

Concerned Citizens Urged to Join New Committee

Nashville, Tennessee - A statewide coalition of concerned citizens has quickly formed the **Committee for an Independent Judiciary** in response to a legislative effort to unseat a prominent Tennessee judge and change the balance of power in the state.

Coordinated by attorneys Bob Boston, Aubrey Harwell and Billye Sanders in Nashville and Roger Dickson of Chattanooga, Lucian Pera of Memphis and Wayne Ritchie of Knoxville, the group strives to educate about the perils of the pending legislation which would swiftly deconstruct the state's system of justice by allowing powerful people to influence the decisions of any Tennessee judge.

The unprecedented legislation has triggered immediate and vast outrage statewide. It targets one of Tennessee's distinguished judges, Chancellor Ellen Hobbs Lyle, based on wrongful allegations that, in a case that was randomly assigned to her court, she expanded the constitutional right to vote by mail during the 2020 Presidential election in Tennessee and then critiqued the state officials who she held did not comply with her order. The facts fail to back up these allegations.

In addition to the committee, the Tennessee Bar Associations and Nashville Bar Association and communities of other coalitions of attorneys and judges have swiftly opposed the legislation.

"This legislation represents a direct assault on Tennessee's independent legal system and we can not permit it to pass," said Harwell. "We invite all citizens to learn about this alarming attack on fair and impartial justice in our state and join our efforts to put an end to this dangerous legislation."

Those interested in this effort can first visit supporttnjudiciary.com, according to Harwell.

First appointed by Governor Don Sundquist, Chancellor Lyle has served more than 25 years in Davidson County as a state court chancery judge. She is recognized by her peers – Republicans and Democrats - as one of the top judges in Davidson County and the state. She was also chosen by the Tennessee Supreme Court in 2015 to preside over its first business court, a position she filled with distinction and dedication. “Chancellor Lyle’s reputation as a highly respected and qualified judge makes it clear that this resolution is about politics and not the law,” said Boston.

The resolution targeting Chancellor Lyle – but threatening every judge in the state - is based on wrongful allegations that, in a case that was randomly assigned to her court, she expanded the constitutional right to vote by mail during the 2020 Presidential election in Tennessee and then critiqued the state officials who she held did not comply with her order. The facts fail to back up these allegations.

“The State Supreme Court long ago held that the removal of a judge cannot be based on ‘political bias or personal dislike.’” said Sanders. “A fair and impartial judiciary is a cornerstone of our democracy. It is a separate and equal branch of government, the unique role of which must be respected. Judges must be independent and free of political influence. We must protect that independence.”