



JUDGE4YOURSELF PRESS RELEASE – August 20, 2026

Judge4Yourself was not created to endorse political parties, candidates, or political agendas. It was created from the belief that lawyers who work with current judges and judicial candidates have a unique perspective on those seeking election to the bench, one that is worthwhile for the public to consider when electing judges. Our purpose is to help voters make informed decisions through an independent process in a way that a political party slate card inherently cannot.

We respect the right of candidates and political organizations to question, critique, or disagree with our process. In fact, we believe thoughtful criticism can be valuable when it causes us to continually examine and improve our work. That commitment is evident in the many changes Judge4Yourself implemented heading into the 2026 election cycle to make our process more objective and transparent.

Despite the protestations of some who would rather voters choose candidates based on party affiliation more than their qualifications, more countywide judicial candidates, including candidates from both parties, have chosen to participate directly in the Judge4Yourself process in 2026 than the small number who have chosen, or have been encouraged by party leadership, not to participate in this independent accountability process.

But our purpose remains unchanged: Judge4Yourself evaluates judicial candidates based on principles we believe are essential to a strong and independent judiciary, including integrity, judicial temperament, knowledge of the law, fairness, independence, experience, and a commitment to equal justice.

Our responsibility is *not* to produce ratings that make every candidate, organization, or political party comfortable. Our responsibility is to conduct a consistent and transparent process, apply our standards fairly, and provide voters with meaningful information they otherwise may not have.

Importantly, beginning with the 2026 elections, all candidates in contested judicial races, whether they submit the requested materials or agree to an interview with the Coalition, will be rated by the Judge4Yourself Committee. Those ratings will be based on publicly available information, including professional qualifications, courtroom experience, community reputation, and demonstrated commitment to an independent judiciary. This new mandatory rating system prioritizes the informational needs of the electorate rather than making the availability of information dependent upon the participation decisions of individual candidates or political parties.



In an ideal world, every candidate nominated for judicial office would earn an “Excellent” rating, and voters could not go wrong in selecting a judge. Until we reach that ideal, however, experienced lawyers representing a broad cross-section of the legal community are well positioned to provide the public with an informed perspective on judicial candidates and their qualifications for office.

If our commitment to an independent evaluation process draws criticism, we can accept that. What we cannot do is allow political considerations to determine what information the public receives about those seeking judicial office.

Judge4Yourself will continue doing the work, not for a political party, not for individual candidates, but for the public.

Sincerely,

Khalida Sims Jackson, Esq.

Chair, Judge4Yourself