

Promoting Judicial Independence and an Accountable Judiciary

Whereas, the citizens of Texas deserve a system of judicial selection that promotes a judiciary that is: A) independent and impartial, B) accountable, and C) qualified; and

Whereas, the existence of an independent, impartial judiciary is essential to a free society, but is threatened by judicial elections because they enable special interest groups to wield power over candidates; and

Whereas, judicial elections hold judges accountable only to the extent that the electorate is knowledgeable about the record and qualifications of specific candidates for judicial office; and

Whereas, 68% of state district and appellate judges are elected in districts with populations over 250,000 where voters are hampered in their ability to become informed about the qualifications of judicial candidates; and

Whereas, 55% of active appellate judges and 36% of active district judges in 2015 initially assumed office by appointment to an open seat, the citizens of Texas deserve for these vacancies to be filled in a transparent and public manner; and

Whereas, the longest serving U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall stated: "What is it that makes us trust our judges? Their independence in office and manner of appointment." And now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Texas Federation of Republican Women supports an amendment to the Texas Constitution that would reform the current system of selecting judges in Texas.