

# GARY BORGENDALE

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Dear Committee Members of Civil Justice:

The purpose of this letter and potential opportunity to testify is to offer my support of HF 224 - proposed legislation which I believe will preserve the integrity and impartiality of the Minnesota courts.

First of all I believe the judicial system in Minnesota is one of the better ones in the country, yet the very real threat of high cost elections may raise issues of creditability and integrity. We have already seen this in recent State Supreme Court elections in Wisconsin.

It is important I share my background. Currently, I am the Local Ministry Director for AM980 KKMS radio. My statement represents my personal views only. From a political spectrum I would be viewed as a conservative, having started three conservative grassroots organizations over the last six years.

As a follower of Jesus Christ, I look to the Bible as my first reference. I am reminded of Jethro's advice to Moses as people stood in long lines to have Moses hear their grievances. Jethro gave wise advice to Moses – what you are doing wears out yourself and the people. This was Jethro's guidance to Moses from Exodus 18:21 "But choose some capable men from among the people – men who respect God, who can be trusted and who will not change their decisions for money." This is wise advice even today and to me the key is "choose" – not necessarily elect but choose those capable from among the people.

I believe the merit selection system combined with retention elections is the best way to provide an impartial and just judicial system for the following reasons:

- As a follower of Christ, I am to watch out for those without power – the poor, the widowed, the orphan, and the imprisoned. I believe merit selection and retention elections best address this responsibility.
- Merit selection will narrow the extremes on both the right and left of the political spectrum. Potential judicial appointees will be cautious of making extreme rulings which could lessen their chances of selection.
- In high price, extremely competitive judicial elections, it becomes very difficult for judges to reclude themselves from cases of constituency support.
- Endorsement by both the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce and the Minnesota AFL-CIO. This is historical in our state to have both business and labor supporting an issue as significant as judicial selection.

Thank you again for your time today and your service to the great state of Minnesota. I urge your support of HF 224.

Sincerely,



Gary Borgendale  
Mounds View, MN