



A public education program
of The Florida Bar

Educating the Public

Conference of Chief Justices and Conference of State Court Administrators

Developed by The Florida Law Related Education Association, Inc.
www.flrea.org

F . L . R . E . A
FLOR  **DA**
Law Related Education Association, Inc.

ASSESSING THE SITUATION...

1. How does the Court Interact with the public? .
2. What is communicated by visiting your courthouse?
3. What educational materials do you provide to the public?
4. What educational programs do you have at the Court or are you involved with outside of the Court?



RESOURCES FOR JUDICIAL ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH CIVIC EDUCATION



1. Identify connections between increased knowledge of the judicial branch and the public's support, trust, and confidence in courts.
2. Describe the benefits to the judicial branch of being involved in public education.
3. How can spouses or families be involved?



SO WHAT DOES THE PUBLIC KNOW?

A 2014 national survey conducted by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania has found that:

- Only 36% of respondents could name all three branches of the U.S. government, just as many (35 percent) could not name a single one.
- Just over a quarter of Americans (27 percent) know it takes a two-thirds vote of the House and Senate to override a presidential veto.
- One in five Americans incorrectly thinks that a 5-4 Supreme Court decision is sent back to Congress for reconsideration.



XAVIER UNIVERSITY STUDY: AMERICANS PUT TO SHAME

Center for the American Dream 2012 study revealed that :

- One in three natural born citizens failed the civics portion of the US Citizenship Test.
- Compared to a 97.5 percent pass rate for immigrants.



XAVIER STUDY CONTINUED

- **85 percent** did not know the meaning of “rule of law.”
- **82 percent** could not name “two rights stated in the Declaration of Independence.”
- **75 percent** were not able to correctly answer, “What does the judicial branch do?”
- **71 percent** were unable to identify the Constitution as the “supreme law of the land.”



A public education program

<http://www.citizenship-aei.org/2012/04/americans-failing-citizenship-test-again/>

GALLUP POLL 2014

Americans' confidence in all three branches of the U.S. government has fallen, reaching record lows for the Supreme Court (30%) and Congress (7%), and a six-year low for the presidency (29%).

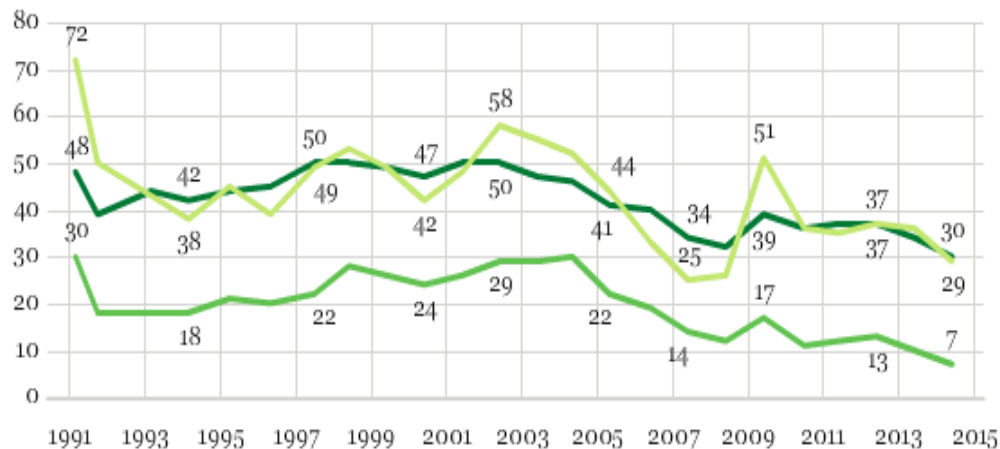
Americans' Level of Confidence in the Three Branches of Government

% Great deal/Quite a lot

■ The U.S. Supreme Court

■ Congress

■ The presidency



GALLUP

The presidency had the largest drop of the three branches this year, down seven percentage points from its previous rating of 36%.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

Let's examine your civic knowledge....

Question

7

What is the “rule of law”?



Civics Flash Cards
for the Naturalization Test



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

Question

10

What does the judicial
branch do?



Civics Flash Cards
for the Naturalization Test

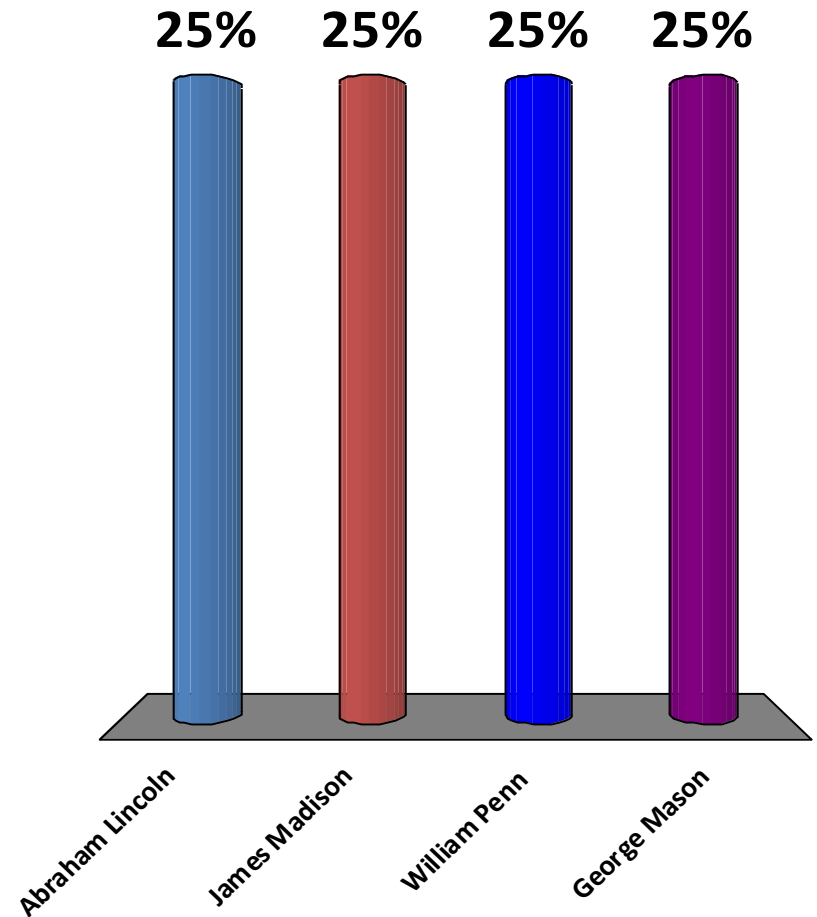


U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

QUESTION 1

The Federalist Papers supported the passage of the U. S. Constitution. Name one of the writers.

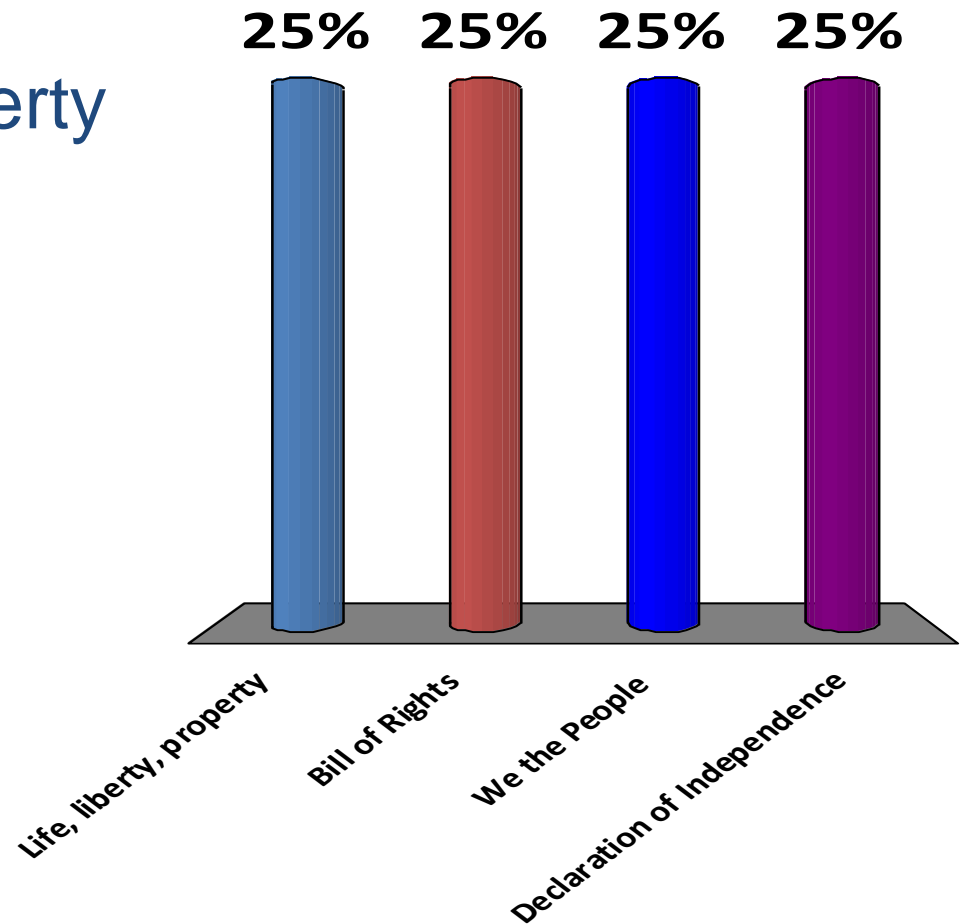
- A. Abraham Lincoln
- B. James Madison
- C. William Penn
- D. George Mason



QUESTION 2

The idea of self-government is in the first three words of the Constitution. What are these words?

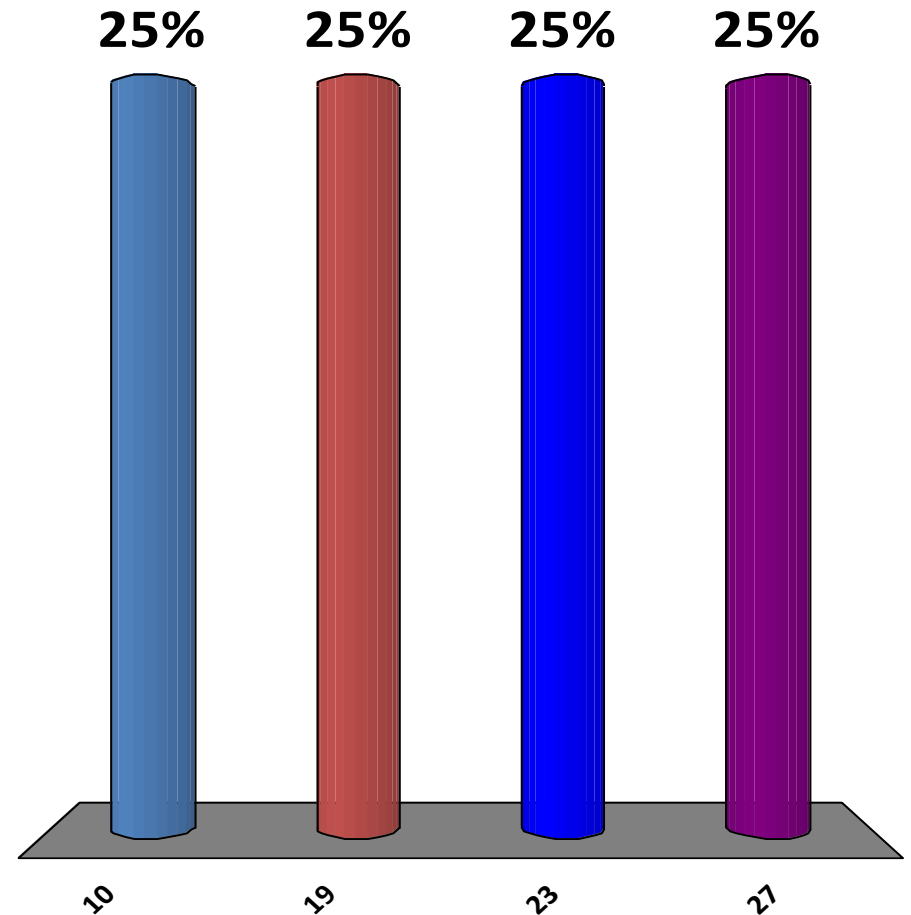
- A. Life, liberty, property
- B. Bill of Rights
- C. We the People
- D. Declaration of Independence



QUESTION 3

How many amendments does the US Constitution have?

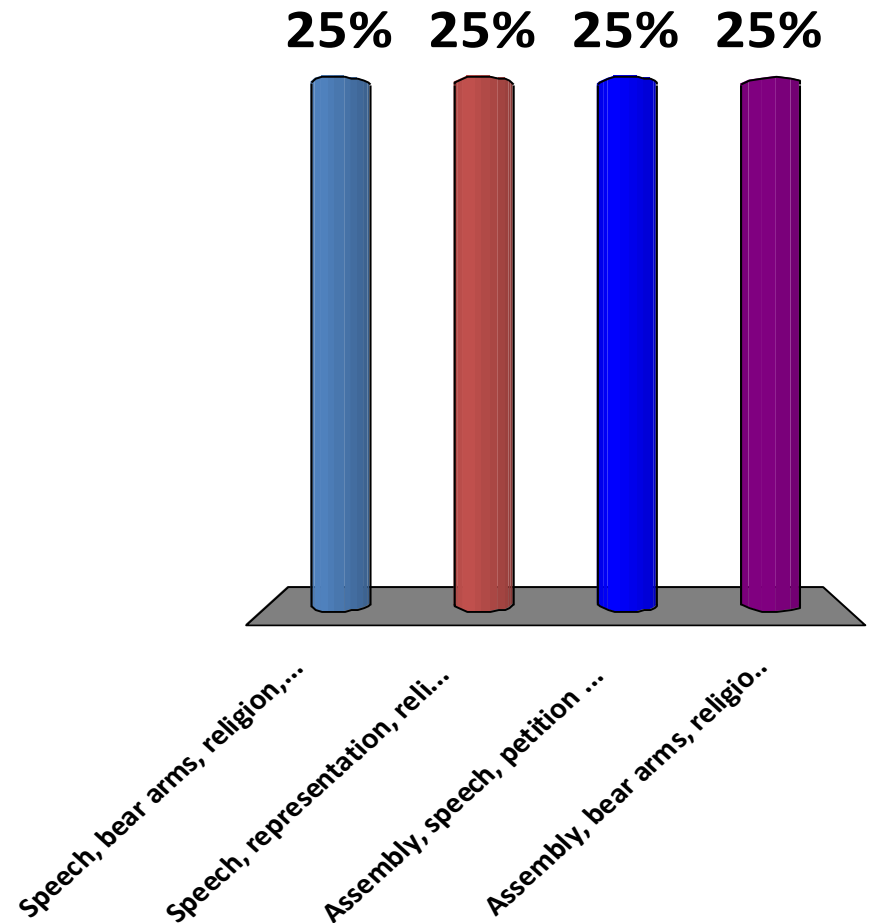
- A. 10
- B. 19
- C. 23
- D. 27



QUESTION 4

Name the five rights in the First Amendment.

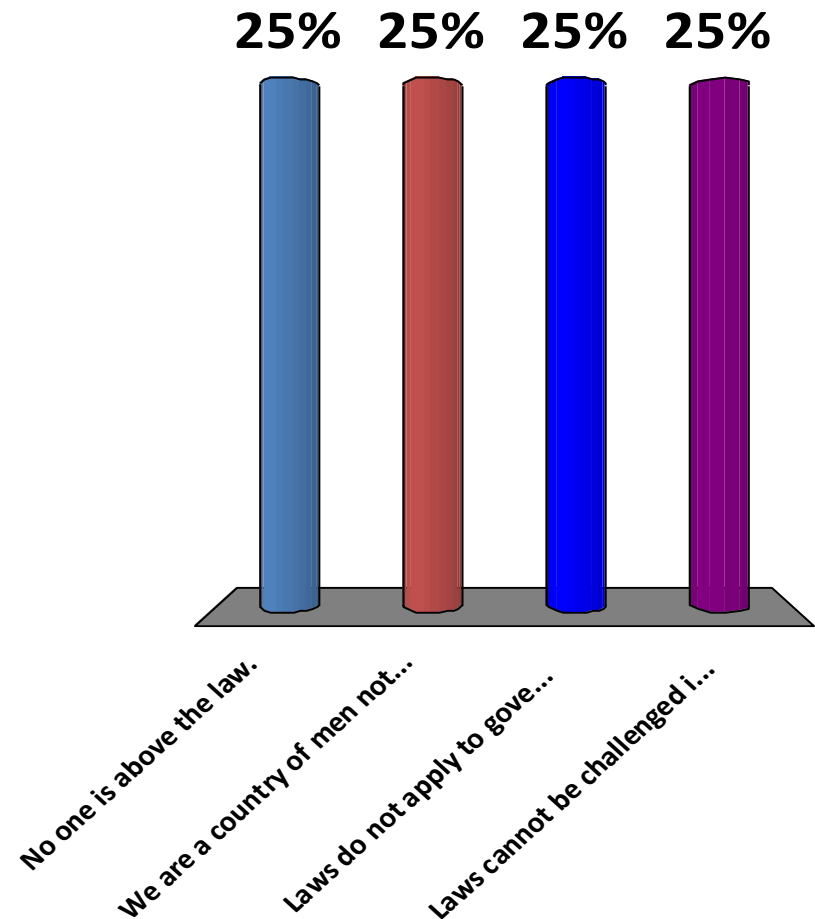
- A. Speech, bear arms, religion, press, jury trial
- B. Speech, representation, religion, press, petition the government
- C. Assembly, speech, petition the government, religion, press
- D. Assembly, bear arms, religion, press, petition the government.



QUESTION 5

What is the rule of law?

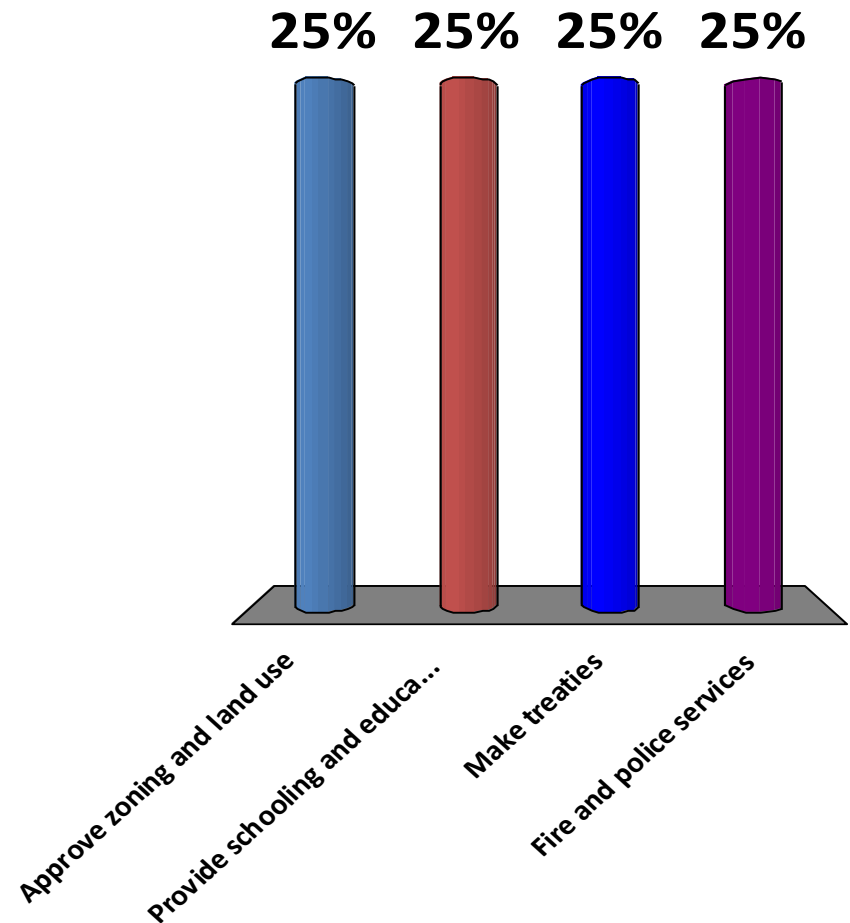
- A. No one is above the law.
- B. We are a country of men not laws.
- C. Laws do not apply to government leaders.
- D. Laws cannot be challenged in court.



QUESTION 6

Under our Constitution some powers belong to the federal government. What is one power of the federal government.

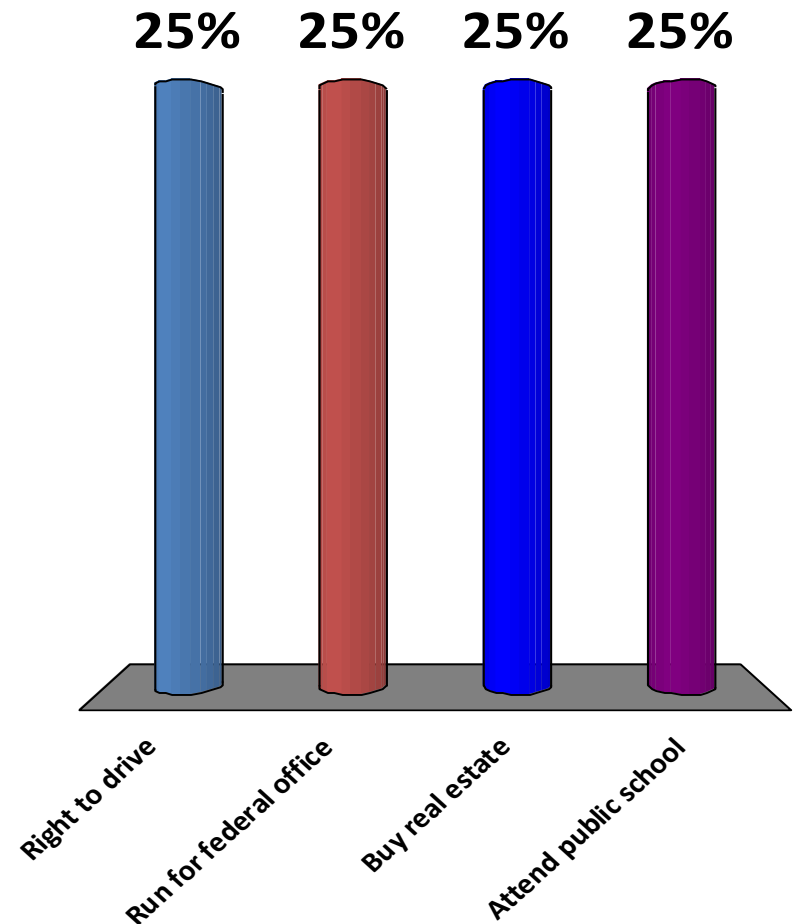
- A. Approve zoning and land use
- B. Provide schooling and education
- C. Make treaties
- D. Fire and police services



QUESTION 7

Name one right only for United States citizens.

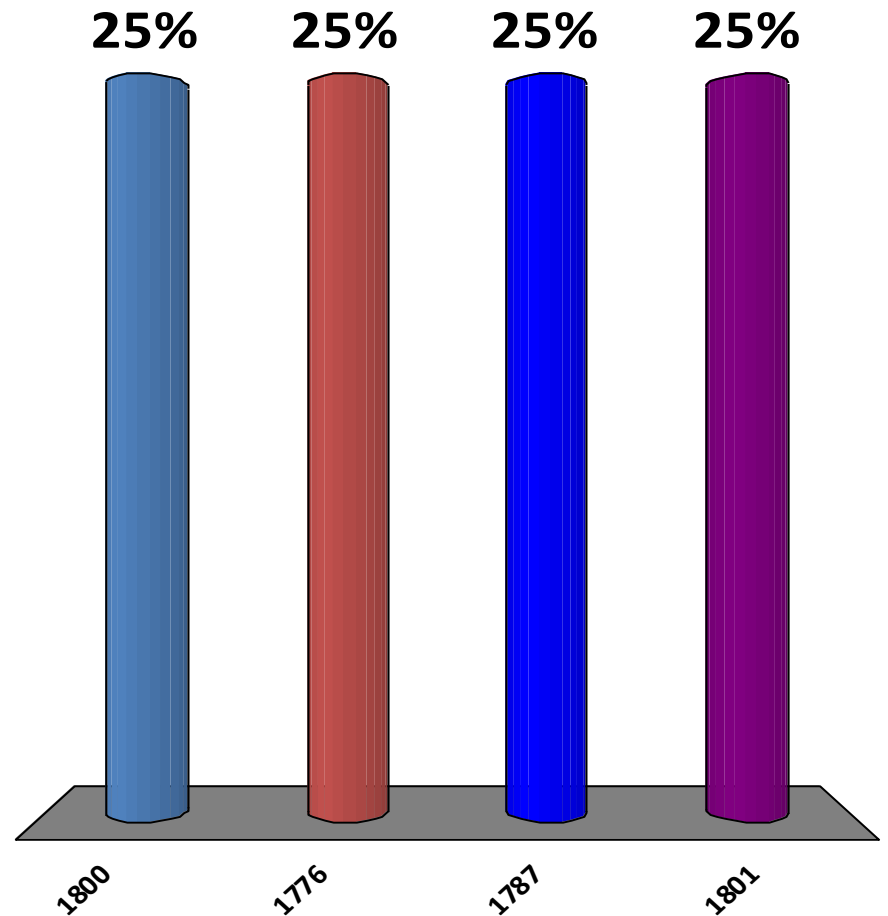
- A. Right to drive
- B. Run for federal office
- C. Buy real estate
- D. Attend public school



QUESTION 8

When was the Constitution written?

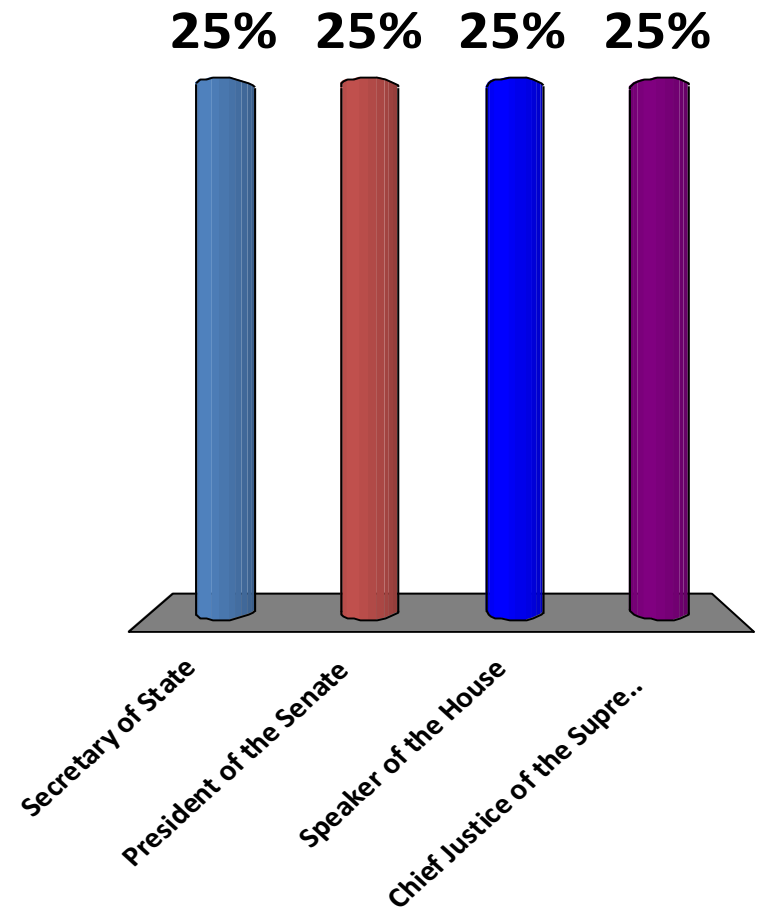
- A. 1800
- B. 1776
- C. 1787
- D. 1801



QUESTION 9

If the President and Vice-President can no longer serve, who would become President?

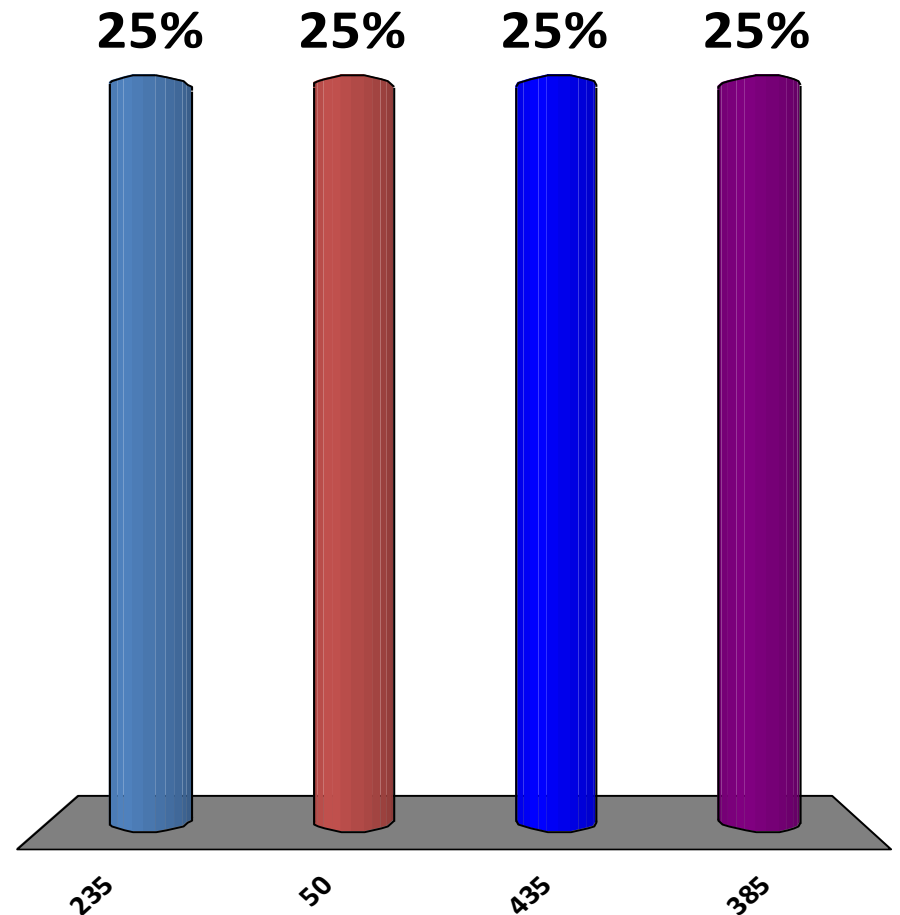
- A. Secretary of State
- B. President of the Senate
- C. Speaker of the House
- D. Chief Justice of the Supreme Court



QUESTION 10

How many members are in the US House of Representatives?

- A. 235
- B. 50
- C. 435
- D. 385



U.S. CITIZENSHIP TEST

Would you pass the civics portion of the USCIS citizenship exam?

Question

7

What is the “rule of law”?



Civics Flash Cards
for the Naturalization Test



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

Question

10

What does the judicial
branch do?



Civics Flash Cards
for the Naturalization Test



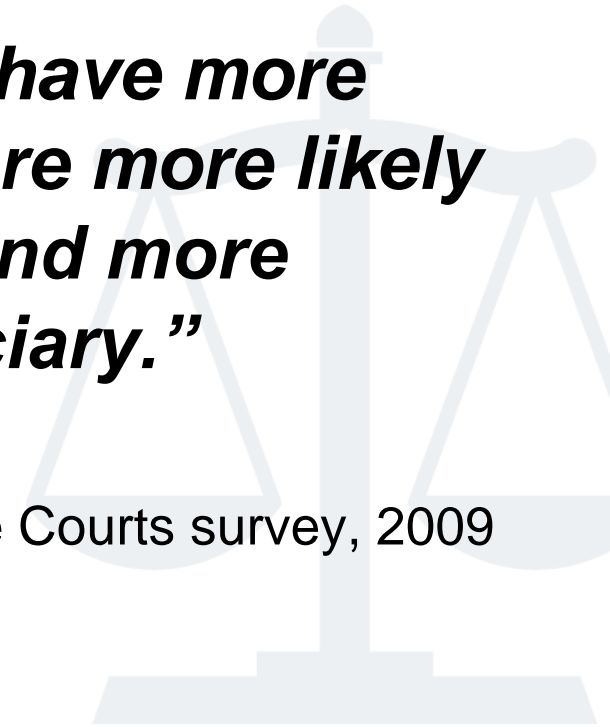
U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

Civic education increases knowledge and confidence in the courts

Judicial Outreach Resource Network

“Better-informed citizens tend to have more confidence in their state courts, are more likely to see judges’ decisions as fair, and more highly value an independent judiciary.”

–National Center for State Courts survey, 2009



MOST TRUSTED MESSENGERS

- 2012 poll by Justice at Stake and NCSC affirmed that judges and retired judges are especially trusted messengers for court – related issues.
- Additionally adult court education programs reveal a higher level of enthusiasm about presentations by judges.



WHO NEEDS CIVICS?



Schools/Students



The public

BENCHMARKS

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WHO NEEDS CIVICS?



Students of all ages

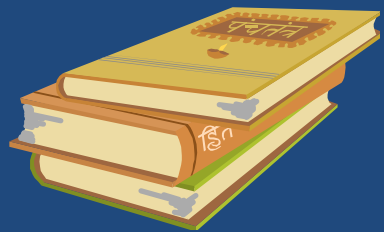


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The Sandra Day O'Connor Act accomplished three major priorities for civics in Florida:

2010
Sandra Day O'Connor Act passed unanimously in Florida Legislature

Required the reading portion of language arts to include civic education content.



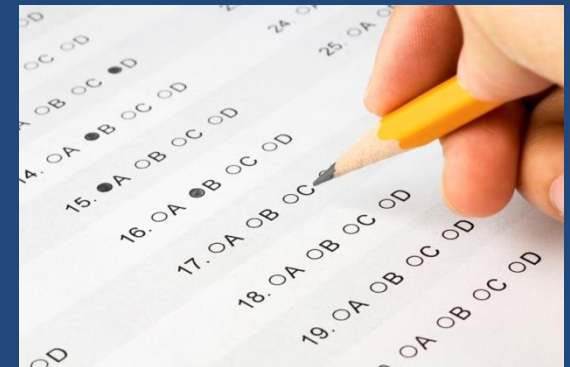
Clarified 2006 Legislation to designate *at least* one semester of civics in the middle grades.

Students must successfully complete at least a one semester civics education course in middle school. Beginning with students entering grade 6 in 2012-2013.

Amended s. 1003.4256, F. S.



Required the inclusion of an end of course exam for civics in middle school.



ABOUT FLREA



The screenshot shows the FLREA.org website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for Home, Programs, Resources, News & Events, Reports, Links, and Contact. Below the menu is the FLREA logo, which includes the text "FLORIDA LAW RELATED EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, INC." and a graphic of a scale of justice. A search bar is located below the logo. The main content area features a quote from AungSan Suukyi, a 1991 Nobel Peace Prize Recipient, about the responsibility of teaching children a sense of justice and compassion. Below the quote is a photograph of the Florida State Capitol building. To the right of the photo is a "News and Events" section with two articles: "We the People" and "Project Citizen online program". The "We the People" article discusses a curriculum distributed through the Florida Law Related Education Association, Inc. The "Project Citizen" article describes a curricular program for middle, secondary, and post-secondary students. At the bottom left of the screenshot, there is a "PROGRAMS" section.

www.flrea.org

- Private, nonprofit dedicated to civic and law related education/ education for democracy
- Spanning three decades of respected programs.
- Nonpartisan, law-focused, grassroots.
- Efforts have expanded statewide and internationally.



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STUDENT SIMULATIONS

FLORIDA HIGH SCHOOL AND MIDDLE SCHOOL MOCK TRIAL



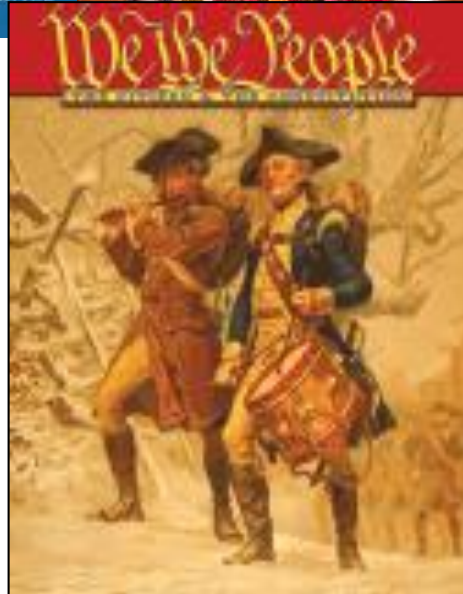
**FLORIDA HIGH
SCHOOL MOOT
COURTMARKS**

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FLREA STUDENT PROGRAMS

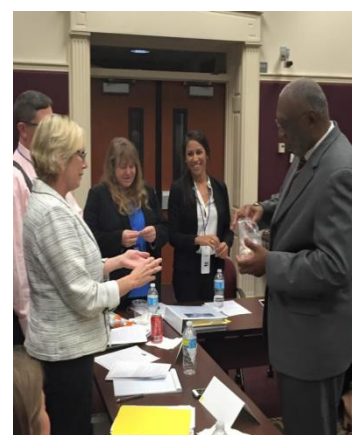
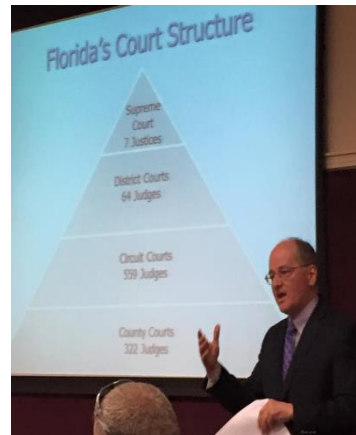
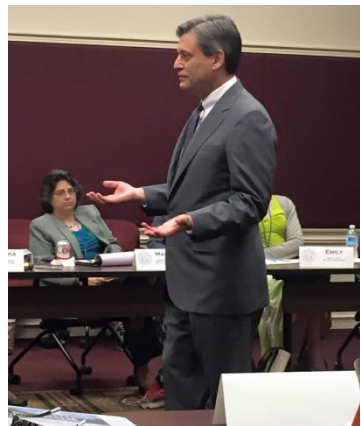


PROJECT Citizen



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JUSTICE TEACHING INSTITUTE FOR TEACHERS



JUSTICE TEACHING

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LESSONS:

- **Invaders Activity** Plus **Case Summaries** and PowerPoint Presentations **Version 1 (shorter)**- Can be completed in one class period. **Version 2 (longer)**- Requires at least 90 minutes. The Invaders Activity is designed to introduce students to the rights guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution.
- **The First Amendment** - This activity creates an awareness of the five rights contained in the First Amendment to the Constitution.
- **The Candy Game** - This activity will help students understand the rules, the rulemaking process and the role of the courts.
- **Planet Lawless** - An activity to teach students about laws in a civilized society.
- **No Animals Allowed On School Grounds** plus **Power Point** - This activity allows students to discuss how laws are interpreted.
- **The Truth About Bullies** plus **Power Point** - This activity teaches students about the characteristics of bullies. Tools for addressing bullying conduct in school are also presented.
- **NEW Yertle the Turtle**- This activity teaches students about laws and rights, while educating them about the importance of the rule of law.

Justice By The People (Grades 5 - 8) - from **Scholastic**. **Note: This interactive lesson plan satisfies the following Sunshine State Standards for Grade 5, Civics and Government:** Standard 3 SS.5.C.3.3, SS.5.C.3.6

- **Make Your Case Game Overview**
- **Overview of the Unit Plan**
- **Play the "Make Your Case" Game**

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL LESSONS:

- **Invaders Activity** Plus **Case Summaries** and PowerPoint Presentations **Version 1 (shorter)**- Can be completed in one class period. **Version 2 (longer)**- Requires at least 90 minutes. The Invaders Activity is designed to introduce students to the rights guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution.
- **Short Takes - Icebreakers** - These are short 20-minute activities that can be used as stand alone activities or introductory exercises. Includes a **Handout** describing various types of government-structured activities that give students the opportunity to develop their own form of government and how it will operate as well as the rights they will have under the U.S. Constitution.
- **Constitutional Scavenger Hunt** - This activity will help participants become familiar with the Florida Constitution and the provisions for the state courts system.
- **Constitutional Scavenger Hunt** - This activity will help participants become familiar with the U.S. Constitution. **Answer Key for the U.S. Constitutional Scavenger Hunt** is provided!
- QUIZ SHOW: **The Florida Courts and the Constitution Scavenger Hunt**- This game show format provides a stimulating environment that will familiarize participants with the the Florida Constitution, the judicial branch, supreme court justices, judicial duties, the courts and more.
- **You and the Law (pdf)** Plus **QUIZ SHOW: You and the Law** (powerpoint) - This activity is designed to be used with the Legal Guide for New Adults brochure distributed by The Florida Bar. The QUIZ SHOW GAME format provides a stimulating environment for introducing legal content and encouraging further research on law-related topics.



ICIVICS



BILL OF RIGHTS EDITION

Play Time: 30+ min

In *Do I Have A Right?: Bill of Rights*, you run your own firm of lawyers specializing in the Bill of...



BRANCHES OF POWER

Play Time: 30+ min

Do you like running things? *Branches of Power* allows you to do something that no one else can...



CAST YOUR VOTE

Play Time: 0-15 min

What issues do you want to ask candidates about? In *Cast Your Vote*, you choose the questions in a...

DO I HAVE A RIGHT?

In *Do I Have A Right?*, you'll run your own firm of lawyers

BRANCHES OF POWER

Do you like running things? *Branches of Power* allows you to do something that no...

Play Game

SUPREME DECISION

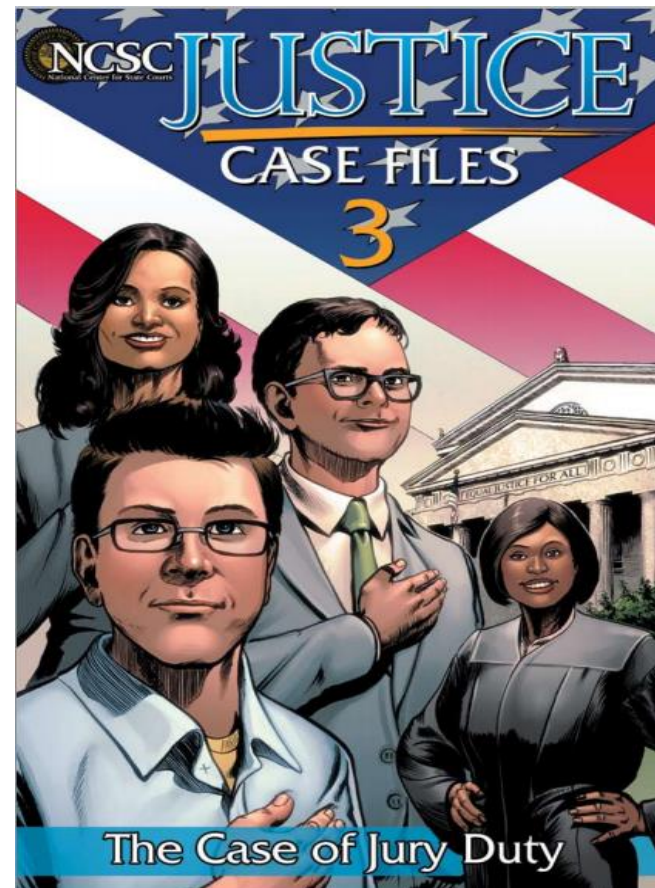
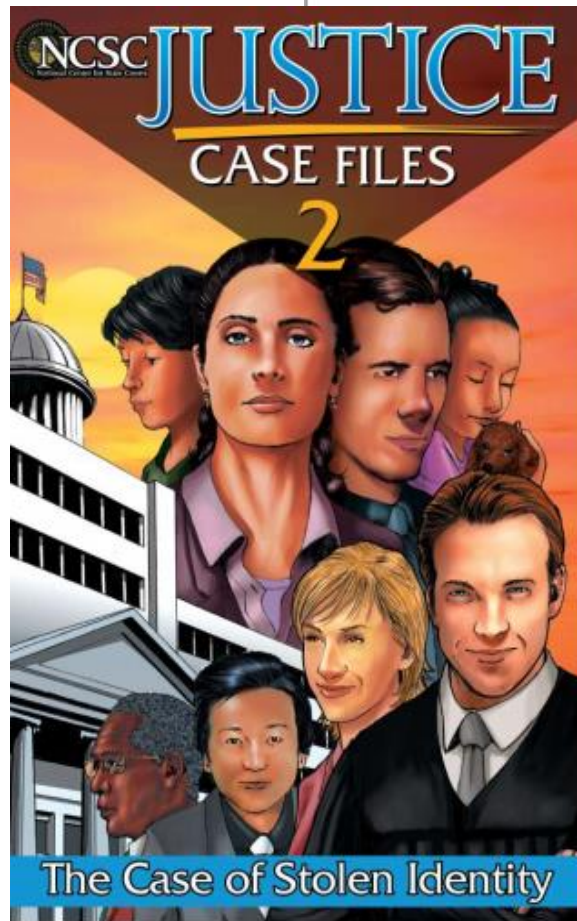
Ever wondered how the Supreme Court really works? In *Supreme Decision*, you help cast...

Play Game



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NCSC GRAPHIC NOVELS



WHO NEEDS CIVICS?



The public



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OPPORTUNITIES GALORE

- Courthouse education and tour programs on Constitution Day or Law Day
- Mock oral arguments at the Court (Florida cases on-line)
- Reporters Workshops at the Court



EDUCATING ADULTS



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of The Florida Bar

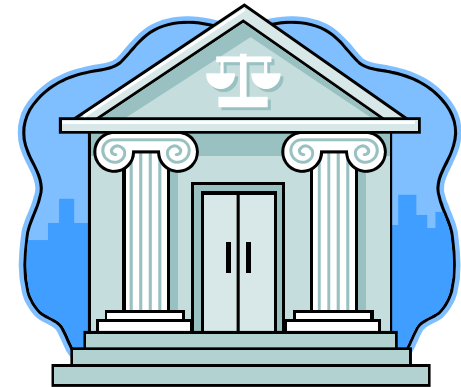
BENCHMARKS ADULT CIVICS EDUCATION

- Series of activities developed for **adult, nonpartisan** group presentations.
- Designed for use by attorneys and judges to educate the public about the courts and the Constitution.
- Activities range from **30 to 60 minutes**.
- Presentation materials include warm up activities, handouts, and presentation guides.
 - Most activities include a PowerPoint and **engaging activities** to draw audience members into the presentation.
- Presenters can receive **CLE Credit (Ethics)** for presentations made (up to three credits per reporting period)



OBJECTIVES OF BENCHMARKS

- Strengthen public knowledge and understanding of the courts and the Constitution.



- Improve trust and confidence in the judicial branch and the legal system.

- Educate the public about our form of government.

- Instill within the legal community the principles of duty and service to the public.



THE FLORIDA BAR WEBSITE

www.flabar.org



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Florida Bar website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for "CLINICS", "Rules", "Professionalism", "Log in", and "Follow Us". Below this is a header section with "THE FLORIDA BAR" and the organization's seal. A secondary navigation bar contains "ABOUT THE BAR", "NEWS & EVENTS", "FOR THE PUBLIC", "MEMBER SERVICES", "LOG IN", and "FIND A LAWYER". A search bar is located below the navigation. The main content area features a large image of the Florida Bar building with a "for the Public" overlay. To the right, there are three featured resources: "online LRS Lawyer Referral Service", "Attorney's Fees Do You Have A Will?", and "Guide for Florida Voters". Below these is a section titled "WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?" with a list of links: "Find a Lawyer", "Attorney Discipline Information", "Pro Bono/Legal Aid Offices", "File a Complaint Against a Lawyer", and "File a Complaint Against a Non-Lawyer". A "More links for the public" button is also present. At the bottom of the main content area, there is a navigation bar with "LAWYERS", "THE PUBLIC", and "PARALEGALS".

2015 Annual Convention
June 24-27 - Boca Raton

Practice Resource Institute

Bar News June 15, 2015

Find a Lawyer

Education program
of the Florida Bar



THE FLORIDA BAR



ABOUT THE BAR

Benchmarks: Raising the Bar on Civics Education

Benchmarks is a series of civic education activities that attorneys can present when they speak to civic and community groups. Many Americans lack basic knowledge about their government and the courts; Benchmarks offers a way to bridge the gap and educate and engage audiences about civics education. Activities cover:

- Amending the Florida Constitution and the role of the courts.
- Judging candidates for judicial office.
- Understanding what makes a law "constitutional."
- Getting beyond labels in discussing courts and controversial cases.
- Interpreting what laws mean.
- Testing your knowledge of what's in the U.S. and Florida constitutions.



Each activity comes with an overview, handouts and is guided by a PowerPoint. All materials can be downloaded from The Florida Bar website.

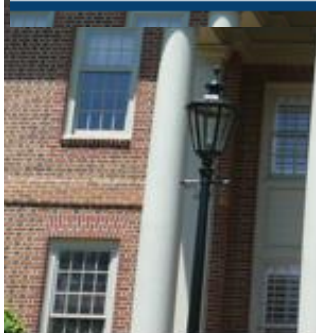
Attorneys can receive CLE credit for making Benchmarks presentations. Benchmarks presenters can earn one ethics credit hour for each presentation for up to three presentations in a three-year reporting period. [Form to apply for credit](#).

[Back to Top](#)

- [File a Complaint Against a Non-Lawyer](#)

[More links for the public](#)

from the Florida Access To Civil Jus...



[FIND A LAWYER](#)

[Information](#)

[General Service](#)

[Arbitration Courts](#)

[Legal Services](#)

[Judicial Practice of Law](#)

[Lawyer](#)








[LAWYERS](#) [THE PUBLIC](#) [PARALEGALS](#)

BENCHMARKS

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Benchmarks Toolkit

We're glad you want to make Benchmarks presentations! This Benchmarks Toolkit will help you get started! Tools included are:

- Why Benchmarks Matters 
- Suggestions for groups to contact 
- Benchmarks contact form for civics groups 
- A Listing of Benchmarks activities 
- Tips for making good presentations 
- An evaluation form to give to groups 
- Information on how to apply for CLE credit 



If you have questions, please contact Zannah Lyle at The Florida Bar at slyle@flabar.org or (850) 561-5669.



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THE FLORIDA BAR

[ABOUT THE BAR](#)[NEWS & EVENTS](#)[FOR THE PUBLIC](#)[MEMBER SERVICES](#)[LOG IN](#)[FIND A LAWYER](#)

THE FLORIDA BAR / For the Public

Fair & Impartial Courts

Informed Voters-Fair Judges Project

The **Informed Voters-Fair Judges Project of the National Association of Women Judges** [↗](#) focuses on increasing the knowledge of citizens regarding the importance of a fair and impartial judiciary. Florida Supreme Court Justice Barbara Pariente serves as state coordinating committee co-chairperson for the initiative. [Learn more about the Informed Voters Project and download materials for presentations.](#)



Informed Voters Project webinar

Learn how to make Informed Voters Project presentations by listening to a webinar hosted by Florida Supreme Court Justice Barbara Pariente, Annette Pitts, executive director of the Florida Law Related Education Association, and Lisa Hall, of Hall + Media Strategies. Please sign in with your name and email address to be connected.

National Association of Women Judges partners with The Florida Bar

The Informed Voters Project has a goal of educating voters about attacks on the judiciary and why it is in the interest of all citizens to have fair and impartial courts.

Informed Voters Project PSA on voter education wins Emmy

The National Association of Women Judges and the Informed Voters Project garnered a regional Emmy award from the National

BENCHMARKS

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- **Constitution and the Bill of Rights**
- **Courts and the Judicial Branch**
- **Special Topics**

BENCHMARKS LESSONS

SPECIAL TOPICS

- Could You Pass the Test?

Question
7

What is the “rule of law”?




Civics Flash Cards
for the Naturalization Test




U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

Question
10


What does the judicial
branch do?



Civics Flash Cards
for the Naturalization Test



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services



- ★ Everyone must follow the law.
- ★ Leaders must obey the law.
- ★ Government must obey the law.
- ★ No one is above the law.

The Contemplation of Justice statue
outside the U.S. Supreme Court building
in Washington, D.C.
Courtesy of the Collection of the Supreme Court of the
United States.



- ★ reviews laws
- ★ explains laws
- ★ resolves disputes (disagreements)
- ★ decides if a law goes against the Constitution

The Courtroom of the U.S. Supreme
Court building, where the Court has
sat since 1935.
Courtesy of the Collection of the Supreme Court
of the United States.



CASE STUDY: IS IT REASONABLE?

Federal Courts: Scott v Harris

CASE STUDY

1. Does an officer who stops a high-speed chase by hitting the car off the road and causing serious injuries violate the driver's Fourth Amendment rights?
2. Did the officer violate the driver's Fourth Amendment protections by using excessive force during a high-speed chase?



BENCHMARKS

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of The Florida Bar

STATE COURTS CASE STUDY

THE CASE THROUGH THE COURTS *JARDINES CASE*

QUESTION BEFORE THE COURT

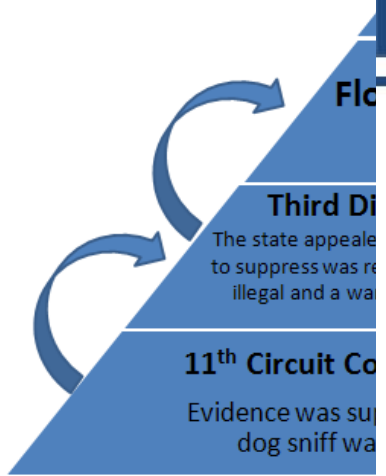
NOW IT IS YOUR TURN TO BE THE JUDGE

Is a “sniff test” by a dog
conducted at the front
home considered a “
Fourth Amendment?”



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OF THE FLORIDA BAR



THE ROLE OF JURIES

WHAT SHOULD JURIES LOOK LIKE?

<p><u><i>Buschell's Case</i></u></p> <p><i>Independent juries</i> free to come to their own verdict.</p>	<p><i>Sheppard v. Maxwell</i></p> <p><i>Verdict to be based on evidence presented in court</i>, not from outside sources.</p>	<p><i>Witherspoon v. Illinois</i></p> <p>Juries must <i>consider the penalty</i> in a case.</p>
<p><i>Taylor v. Louisiana</i></p> <p>Jurors <i>cannot be excluded on the basis of gender</i>; juries should represent a cross section of the community.</p>	<p><i>Batson v. Kentucky</i></p> <p>Jurors <i>cannot be excluded on the basis of race</i>; juries should represent a cross section of the community.</p>	<p><i>Williams v. Florida</i></p> <p>Permitted to implement the <i>person jury</i>, the historical jury.</p>

WHAT ARE THE QUALIFICATIONS OF A JUROR IN FLORIDA?

Florida Statute 40.01 identifies the qualifications of jurors as:

Jurors shall be taken from the male and female persons at least 18 years of age who are citizens of the United States and legal residents of this state and their respective counties and who possess a driver license or identification card issued by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles

- Taken from male and female persons
- **At least 18 years of age**
- **Citizens of the United States**
- **Legal residents of this state and their respective counties**
- **Possess a driver license or identification card issued by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles**



WHAT JUDGES DO

Following the rules

- When you go to a football, baseball or basketball game, or a soccer tournament, or any sporting event, what do you expect from the referee or umpire?



Developed by The Florida Law R

HOW ARE JUDGES DIFFERENT FROM OTHER ELECTED OFFICIALS?

Other elected officials make decisions based on the needs/desires of their **constituents or voters**, **their own beliefs**, or **their political party's agenda**.



Judges must **follow the law** and should not be influenced by politics, special interest groups, money, public opinion or their own personal beliefs.



They should be fair and impartial.

BENCHMARKS

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FAIR COURTS = JUSTICE



A PROGRAM OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN JUDGES

A project of the National Association of Women Judges

Informed Voters FAIR JUDGES

JUSTICE FREE FROM SPECIAL INTERESTS

HOME ABOUT PROJECT STATES GET INVOLVED SPONSOR

Search

Prev *In America* Next
 fairness is the foundation of our laws.
 LEARN ABOUT THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

VALUES VOTER INFO ACCOUNTABILITY

Judicial Branch
 JUDGES APPLY THE LAW FAIRLY - FREE FROM FEAR, SYMPATHY, PREJUDICE...OR PRESSURE FROM SPECIAL INTERESTS.
 READ ON >

KNOW Your Rights
 JOIN THE Conversation

Fair and Free - Full Film - featuring Sandra Day O'Connor (EN)
 from Informed Voters Project
 HARD BUT FAIR CALLS

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD
 IT'S ALL UP TO YOU

IT IS TIME FOR US TO STAND UP FOR FAIR AND IMPARTIAL COURTS

Our courts have demonstrated the ability to protect our basic rights with fair and impartial rulings based solely on the Constitution and laws. It is up to you as a voter to help keep it that way.

- Inform yourself about the state's courts and judges
- Vote for judges based on their character, integrity, fairness and willingness to decide cases based on the law
- [Download English Press Release](#)
- [Download Spanish Press Release](#)

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<http://ivp.nawj.org/>

SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR
 SUPREME COURT JUSTICE (RET)

00:09 HD :: vimeo

Prior to the American Revolution....



Historical Concerns Over Judicial Selection

“He (King George III) has made Judges dependent on his Will alone for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.”

Declaration of Independence citing how the King abused power and controlled the judiciary.



Judicial Branch



What does the judicial branch do?

The role of the judicial branch is to:

- Resolve disputes through a legal process;
- Interpret and apply the law;
- Determine if a law is unconstitutional.



The Role of the Courts



The Constitution
outlines our rights



...and the Courts
protect our rights.



How are judges different from other elected officials?

Legislators make decisions based on the needs/desires of their constituents or voters, their own beliefs, or their political party's agenda.



Judges must follow the law and should not be influenced by politics, special interest groups, money, public opinion or their own personal beliefs.



They should be fair and impartial.

The Judicial Branch

Judges make decisions that directly impact your life.

Yet, how much attention do we give judicial candidates on the ballot?

How often do we review their qualifications?

Do we take the time to learn about *how* judges are selected for their positions?

Most people even leave the ballot blank when it comes to judges.

Circuit and County Court Judges Sample Ballot

CIRCUIT JUDGE 6TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, GROUP 45 (Vote for ONE)	
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Jack Day
<input type="radio"/>	Agnes Theresa McCabe
COUNTY JUDGE, GROUP 2 (Vote for ONE)	
<input type="radio"/>	Frank I. Grey
<input type="radio"/>	Tom Hanlon
<input type="radio"/>	Joseph A. Poblick
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Eva Vergos

Trial court judges run *against* candidates in contested, nonpartisan elections. Voting for one judge eliminates the other candidates.

Appellate Judges Merit Retention Sample Ballot

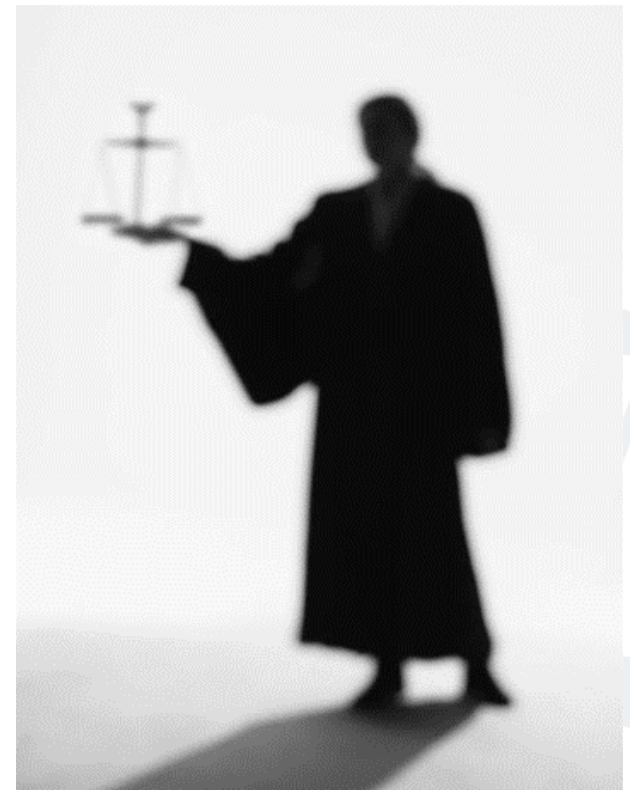
NONPARTISAN/JUDICIAL	
JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT	
Shall Justice Jamison M. Girard of the Supreme Court be retained in office?	
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	YES
<input type="radio"/>	NO
Shall Justice Nancy Mathis of the Supreme Court be retained in office?	
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	YES
<input type="radio"/>	NO
Shall Justice R. Layne Smith of the Supreme Court be retained in office?	
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	YES
<input type="radio"/>	NO

Appellate court judges are not running against an opponent. They are on the ballot to keep/retain their positions after first full year on the bench and every six years thereafter. Each Justice should receive a vote of "yes" or "no".

Characteristics of Judges

What characteristics are most important to you?

- Knowledge of the law
- Impartial/Unbiased
- Fair
- Attentive
- Respectful/Understanding
- Honesty/Integrity
- Neutral
- Professional demeanor



What else would you add?

PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS: THE CRITICAL ELEMENT IN PUBLIC PERCEPTION AND SATISFACTION



Four basic expectations:



1. Voice – the ability to participate in the case by expressing their viewpoint



2. Neutrality – consistently applied legal principles, unbiased decision makers, and a transparency about how decisions are made.



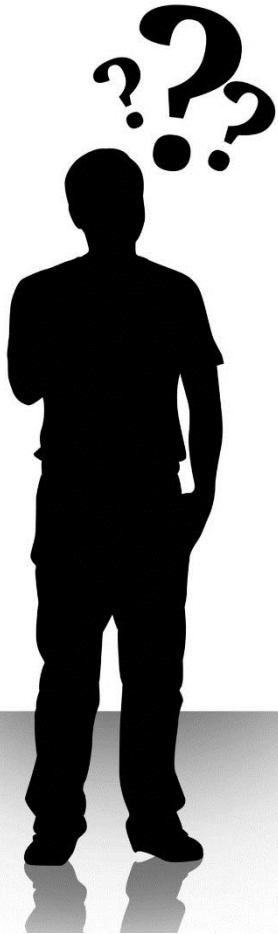
3. Respectful treatment- individuals are treated with dignity and their rights are obviously protected



4. Trustworthy authorities – authorities are benevolent, caring, and sincere



QUESTIONS, MYTHS AND MISPERCEPTIONS



- Judges can do whatever they want in the courtroom.
- Judges have too much power. They decide who gets arrested, what the person is charged with, and they set the punishment for the crimes that are committed.
- Who do the courts work for? The police, the legislature, or the Governor?
- Who are judges responsible to? How are they held accountable?
- I hear that judges can change the law! Why can they do that?



HOW DO JUDGES MAKE DECISIONS?

- Judges make decisions based on the facts and the law.....not based on how they feel about an issue or how the public might feel about an issue.

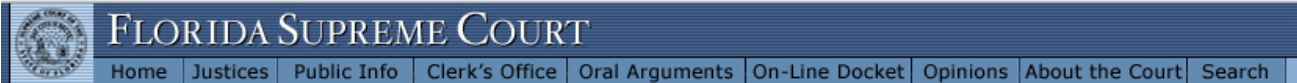


ACCOUNTABILITY

- **The judicial branch is different from the other branches.**
 - It is not a representative branch or a political branch. Judges should make decisions based on the law.
- **Judicial decisions can be appealed to a higher court.**
 - Decisions are published.
- **Judges must follow a code of conduct.**
 - They can be disciplined and removed from the bench. The public can watch disciplinary proceedings and review complaints online. An independent commission investigates complaints filed against judges.
- **U.S. Constitution, sentencing guidelines, court rules, etc.**



CODE OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT



Supreme Court Opinions & Rules

OPINIONS

- [Supreme Court Opinions](#)
- [1st DCA Opinions](#)
- [2nd DCA Opinions](#)
- [3rd DCA Opinions](#)
- [4th DCA Opinions](#)
- [5th DCA Opinions](#)
- [Unofficial Archive of Opinions](#)

JUDICIAL ETHICS

- [Code of Conduct](#)
- [Canon 7 Guide](#)
- [JEAC Opinions](#)

COURT RULES

- [Florida Rules Of Procedure](#)
- [Amendments to Approved Rules](#)
- [Proposed Rules](#)
- [Rules for Mediators](#)

COURT ORDERS

- [Clerk's Office](#)
- [Other Supreme Court](#)



CODE OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT For the State of Florida

Online Version

Reports of misconduct by judges must be made to the [Judicial Qualifications Commission](#) at (850) 488-1581.

Print the [Entire Code of Judicial Conduct in PDF](#).

The [opinions of the Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee](#) are available on the [Sixth Judicial Circuit Website](#).

Visit the web site to [search the opinions](#).

[Preamble](#)

[Definitions](#)

[Canon 1](#). A Judge Shall Uphold the Integrity and Independence of the Judiciary

[Canon 2](#). A Judge Shall Avoid Impropriety and the Appearance of Impropriety in all of the Judge's Activities

[Canon 3](#). A Judge Shall Perform the Duties of Judicial Office Impartially and Diligently



JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE

Public Information

- [High Profile Cases](#)
- [Next OA Calendar](#)
- [Most Recent Opinions](#)

NEED LEGAL SELF HELP?

- [Argument Calendars & Briefs](#)
- [Argument Webcasts](#)
- [Budget Documents](#)
- [Court Documents](#)
- [Court Orders](#)
- [Death Warrant Cases](#)
- [Docket On-Line](#)
- [JQC Cases](#)
- [Merit Retention](#)
- [Opinions & Rules](#)
- [Press Information](#)
- [Press Releases](#)
- [Reporters Handbook](#)
- [Reports & Studies](#)
- [Rules of Court](#)
- [Trial Court Statistics](#)
- [Yearly Schedule](#)

[E-MAIL THE PIO](#)



JUDICIAL QUALIFICATIONS COMMISSION CASES PENDING IN THE FLORIDA SUPREME COURT

Since October 20, 2000, this page has been available on-line to quickly distribute to news media and others any documents filed with the Florida Supreme Court in **Judicial Qualifications Commission** cases involving alleged misconduct by Florida state judges or involuntary retirement of a judge due to serious illness. It does not include documents filed before this date. [More information on the JQC and how to file complaints](#) against Florida state judges is available at the end of this document.

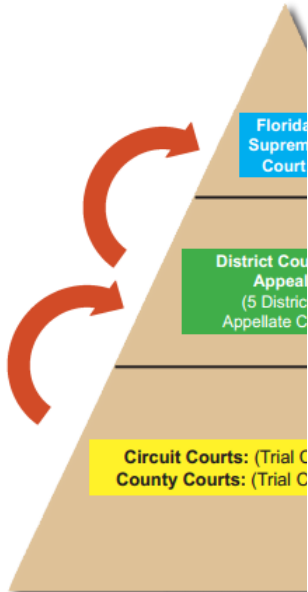
Pending JQC Cases Against Florida State Judges

Judge	Filings	Docket	County	Updated
Andrew J. Decker, III	14-383	Docket	Hamilton	05-13-15
Jackie Lee Fulford	15-786	Docket	Leon/Wakulla	06-24-15
Victoria Griffin	15-865	Docket	Indian River	06-19-15
Cynthia G. Imperato	15-355	Docket	Broward	06-08-15
Debra Krause	13-2263	Docket	Seminole	06-23-15



Resources and Handouts

Florida state get to



Defending Justice. P

Fair and Impartial Courts play a critical role in our democracy.

In America, courts exist to protect people through the nation's courts reflect the most serious criminal case. Unlike the resolution of disputes.

Let's face it – life isn't always fair

A courtroom is the place to go to rig address an injustice. The peaceful differences depends on fair judges. involved in a lawsuit, we need to have judges will decide our case on the basis the evidence presented - with no political affiliation of the individuals involved support or oppose a particular outcome judges' decisions to be fair and impartial who win and those who lose know they hearing and can trust the process.

We must not take the rule of law

In some countries, judges cannot be in cases fairly and impartially. They are so pressures from forces that control the government creates the judicial branch the other branches of government, so that provide decisions free from politics and special interests.

Judicial selection systems must against those seeking to tip the scales

While federal judges are appointed for life are selected differently. In some states chosen by direct votes. In others, they through a judicial selection process and whether they will be retained in office. they are selected, a judge's ability to impartial decisions should not be the politics of the moment or influenced by special interests.



How should I judge

Resources for an informed decision.

Every election presents voters with informed decisions. When judicial they do not know what the issues are.

There are a number of factors that a judge. Here are some ideas to consider.

Focus on essential qualities:

- ✓ Integrity
A judge should be honest, committed to the rule of law
- ✓ Professional Competence
A judge should have a keen legal knowledge and strong Judicial Temperament
- ✓ A judge must be neutral, dispassionate
- ✓ Experience
A judge should have a strong professional excellence in Service
- ✓ A judge should be committed to the administration of justice

Judges decide cases that range from simple to complex. They have with corporations or business individuals, to sentencing or appeals. Judges to stand apart from politics and to focus on the fair resolution of disputes we need help with. As examine a judge's character, integrity and decide cases based on the law. Judges should not be influenced by fear losing their position because of a particular decision.



POLITICS AND SPECIAL INTERESTS HAVE NO PLACE IN OUR COURTROOMS

The rule of law is the cornerstone of democracy and we rely on our courts to uphold it. So it is no exaggeration say that the future of democracy is at stake when political interests seek to seize control of our courts. And they are doing precisely that!

The threat is all too real. Our courts and judges are under siege for doing their job—deciding cases based on the evidence and the law, and not on the basis of some preconceived political agenda or ideology. And the politicians and special interests don't like it. They would have you believe any ruling that doesn't go their way is "judicial activism."

Unlike our representatives in the legislature, we depend to focus on the fair resolution of our problems and decisions subject to influence by special interests, or fear losing their decision.



IT IS TIME FOR US TO

Our courts have demonstrated based solely on the Constitution.

- ✓ Inform yourself about the candidates
- ✓ Vote for judges based on the merits



Keeping Informed

Where to find information about judges in the State of Florida

Making an Informed Choice

Today courts stand as the backbone of our American Democracy, ensuring equal justice under the law for all citizens. Yet, there are concerns that politically motivated special interest groups are attempting to interfere with the very fabric of our justice system. By researching judicial candidates using information provided by nonpartisan entities, citizens may exercise an informed vote thus protecting fair courts and equal justice for all.

Where to Look for Information

In order to make an informed vote, it is important to consult a variety of nonpartisan resources, free from political agendas or special interests. Talk to lawyers who may know judges or judicial candidates on the ballot. Check with voluntary bar associations in your area to review judicial polls and determine how attorneys have evaluated judges on the ballot. See resources below for examples.

National Association of Women Judges Florida

<http://ivp.nawj.org/state/florida>



- This resource provides information on:
 - Judicial selection and retention in Florida
 - Voting information including what to look for in judicial candidates
 - Bios of Judges and Justices on the 2014 ballot

The Florida Bar

<http://www.floridabar.org>



- This resource provides:
 - Voter information
 - Attorney discipline records
 - Poll results for judicial candidates
 - Education programs and Speakers Bureau programs

Provided by:



A public education program of The Florida Bar

BENEFITS OF EDUCATING THE PUBLIC

Benefits of civic education and educating the public about the courts:

1. As the public is more informed, they have “increased confidence in their state courts, are more likely to see judges’ decisions as fair, and more highly value an independent judiciary.”
2. As judges interact with the community, they are humanized in the eyes of the public. “Most trusted messengers”
3. The public will be able to evaluate the qualities and characteristics they want to see in a judge and utilize this information in their selection processes.
4. A more educated citizenry is a more educated jury pool.
5. Clear up misconceptions and misperceptions about the judicial branch.



STATE COURTS: KEY FINDINGS

2014 State of State Courts Poll NCSC

- Courts remain the most trusted branch of government
- Court users express confidence in fairness of proceedings but have doubts about customer service and job performance
- Strong demand for greater availability of online services
- **Public worries that politics undermines the impartiality of the court system**



WHAT YOU CAN DO...

1. Interact with the public through courthouse tours and educational presentations.
2. Analyze the tone of your courthouse.
3. What educational materials do you provide to the public?
4. What educational programs do you have at the Court or are you involved with outside of the Court?



COME OUT FROM BEHIND THE BENCH

“When judges come out from behind the bench and interact with the community, it helps to humanize them and put a personal face on them. It is important for the public to see that judges see it as a priority to take their personal time to engage (and educate) them.”

- Quality Judges Initiative for the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System



A public education program
of The Florida Bar



A public education program
of The Florida Bar

Annette Boyd Pitts
Executive Director
staff@flrea.org

Developed by The Florida Law Related Education Association, Inc.
www.flrea.org

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