



Press Release

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Anchorage, Alaska, June 15, 2012. Chief Justice Walter L. Carpeneti of the Alaska Supreme Court, whose term as chief justice ends this month, today announced his retirement from the court as of January 31, 2013. Carpeneti was appointed to the superior court in Juneau in 1981 by Governor Jay Hammond, and was retained in that position by voters in 1986, 1992, and 1998. He was appointed to the supreme court in 1998 by Governor Tony Knowles and was retained by voters in 2002. He currently serves as Second Vice President on the Board of Directors of the national Conference of Chief Justices.

Chief Justice Carpeneti notes that he is giving early notice of his retirement because the process for filling a judicial vacancy is a long one. Alaska's Constitution adopted a system for selecting judges based on merit, which requires a lengthy evaluation of judicial candidates by the Alaska Judicial Council. The evaluation includes detailed applications, extensive investigation of applicants, polling of all lawyers in the state, public hearings, interviews, nominations to the governor, and appointment by the governor. Chief Justice Carpeneti has urged all judges contemplating leaving the bench to give six to eight months notice to allow a replacement to be ready to serve as soon as possible upon their departure from office.

"Our judicial selection process is one of the best in the world," says Carpeneti, "but it takes time. I want to ensure a transition that creates as little hardship as possible."

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