

# Alaska Judicial Council Recommendation

## Judge Rene J. Gonzalez, Superior Court, Anchorage

**I. Judicial Council Evaluation.** The Alaska Judicial Council, a non-partisan citizens commission established by the Alaska Constitution, finds Judge Gonzalez to be **Qualified** and recommends unanimously (6-0) that the public vote "YES" to retain him as a superior court judge.

**II. Summary of Evaluation Information.** In a survey sent to all 2,644 attorneys in Alaska, Judge Gonzalez was rated in the good range on overall judicial performance (3.7, see graph). He scored highest in the category of "conduct free from impropriety" (4.2). He scored 3.5 or better in all sixteen categories.

Summary Categories	Attorney Survey	Peace Officer Survey	Juror Survey	Court Employee Survey	CourtWatch Report
Legal Ability	3.6	---	---	---	---
Impartiality	4.0	3.6	4.8	---	3.9
Integrity	4.2	3.8	---	4.1	---
Temperament	4.0	3.6	4.8	4.3	3.7
Diligence	3.6	3.6	---	3.9	---
Special Skills	3.8	3.5	---	3.9	---
Overall	3.7	3.5	4.9	4.1	3.7

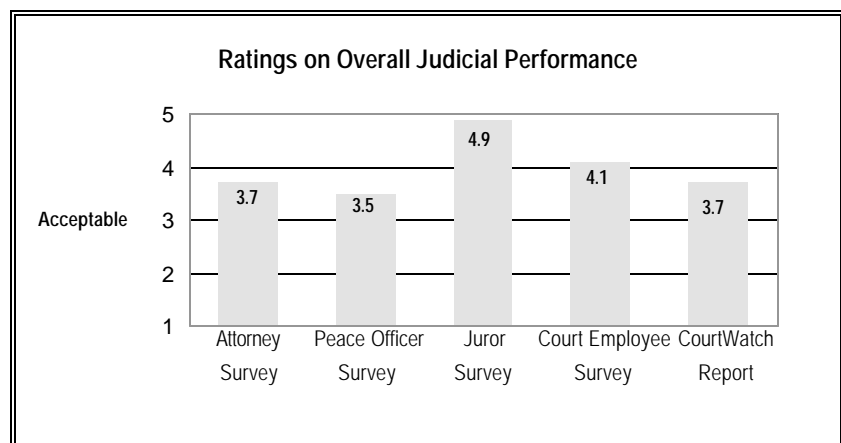
Ratings are based on a one to five scale. Five is the best rating and three is "acceptable."

**Range Description**  
 4.0 - 5.0 = Excellent  
 3.5 - 3.9 = Good  
 3.0 - 3.4 = Acceptable  
 2.5 - 2.9 = Below Acceptable  
 1.0 - 2.4 = Poor

A survey of all 1,890 peace and probation officers in Alaska rated Judge Gonzalez in the good range on overall judicial performance (3.5, see graph). He scored highest in the category of "conduct free from impropriety" (3.9). He scored lowest, but still acceptable, in the category of "consideration of all relevant factors in sentencing" (3.4).

A survey of all jurors appearing before Judge Gonzalez in 1998 and 1999 rated him in the excellent range (4.9) on overall performance. A survey of all court employees rated him in the excellent range (4.1) on overall performance. The independent CourtWatch Report gave Judge Gonzalez a 3.7 overall rating.

The Council also completed a background investigation including a court records check, a disciplinary records check, a review of conflict of interest statements submitted to the court system, a review of any withheld salary warrants and a review of financial disclosure statements submitted to the Alaska Public Offices Commission. Attorneys, peace officers, court employees and jurors were asked to submit written comments about the judge. The Council actively encouraged the public to comment, both in writing and in a statewide public hearing teleconference.



**Recommendation: Vote "YES" to retain Judge Gonzalez**

Contact the Judicial Council at 1029 W. 3rd, Suite 201, Anchorage, AK 99501 (telephone: (907) 279-2526) for more detailed information, or review the information on our Internet site at:

[www.ajc.state.ak.us](http://www.ajc.state.ak.us)



# alaska judicial council

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## Alaska Judicial Council Questionnaire

### Trial Judge 2000 Candidates for Judicial Retention

November 19, 1999

RENE J. GONZALEZ	SUPERIOR COURT
Name	Court

1. Describe your workload during your present term.

a) 98 % Civil Cases                      b) 100± # of trials/year  
2 % Criminal Cases                             # Administrative Appeals  
    % Court Administrative  
100 % Total

MOST OF THE TRIALS ARE NON-JURY DOMESTIC RELATIONS OR CHILD IN NEED OF AID CASES.

2. Please describe your participation on court/Bar committees or other administrative activities during your current term of office.

LAW DAY ACTIVITIES...PRESENTATIONS AT LOCAL HIGH SCHOOLS ANCHORAGE YOUTH COURT

IN THE UPCOMING BAR ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE I WILL BE A PANELIST ON THE ISSUE OF THE USE OF INTERPRETERS IN THE COURTROOM. SEE ATTACHMENT.

3. On a separate sheet of paper please assess, in one or two paragraphs, your judicial performance during your present term. Appropriate areas of comment could include: satisfaction with your judicial role, specific contributions to the

judiciary or the field of law, increases in legal knowledge and judicial skills, or other measures of judicial abilities that you believe to be important.

4. During your most recent term as a judge, have you:

- a) had a tax lien filed or other collection procedure instituted against you by federal, state, or local authorities? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No XXX.
  
- b) been involved in a nonjudicial capacity in any legal proceeding whether as a party or otherwise? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No XXX.
  
- c) engaged in the practice of law (other than as a judge)? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No XXX.
  
- d) held office in any political party? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No XXX.
  
- e) held any other local state or federal office? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No XXX.

If your answer to any of the questions above is "yes," please give full details, including dates, facts, case numbers and outcomes.

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Please provide any other information which you believe would assist the Council in conducting its evaluations and in preparing its recommendations for the 2000 retention elections.

Throughout my judicial career, I have attempted to assure that every person who comes before me is treated fairly, impartially and with human dignity. I do my utmost to assure that every litigant is given a fair and unbiased opportunity to present their side regardless of the issues involved in the case.

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5. Please list the names and case numbers of the three most recent jury cases tried before you, identify the attorneys involved, and show their current addresses. (Attach additional pages if necessary.)

	<i>Name of Case</i>	<i>Case Number</i>
<b>1</b>	<u>WALDEN VS. STATE OF AK/DOT</u>	<u>3AN-95-8876CI</u>

*Attorneys Involved*

Name: TIMOTHY LAMB  
Address: 1007 W 3RD AVE, STE 400  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

Name: RAYMOND BROWN  
Address: 510 L ST, STE 202  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

Name: ANDREW GUIDI  
Address: 1007 W 3RD AVE, STE 400  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

Name: PETER GRUENSTEIN  
Address: 500 L ST STE 401  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

	<i>Name of Case</i>	<i>Case Number</i>
<b>2</b>	<u>RICHARD HUNT VS. ARCTIC CAMPS</u>	<u>3AN-95-10112CI</u>

*Attorneys Involved*

Name: DENNIS JAMES  
Address: 1500 W 33RD AVE STE 100  
ANCHORAGE AK 99503

Name: LARRY BERRY  
Address: 1400 W BENSON STE 315  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99503

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

	<i>Name of Case</i>	<i>Case Number</i>
<b>3</b>	<u>LEPINE V HARTZELL</u>	<u>3AN-97-9266CI</u>

*Attorneys Involved*

Name: CHARLES TULIN  
Address: 529 W 3RD AVE  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

Name: ROBERT RICHMOND  
Address: 360 K ST 4TH FLOOR  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Please list the names and case numbers of the three most recent non-jury cases tried before you, identify the attorneys involved, and show their current addresses. (Attach additional pages if necessary.)

<i>Name of Case</i>	<i>Case Number</i>
<b>1</b> <u>KOOB V KNUITSEN</u>	<u>3AN-97-1243CI</u>

*Attorneys Involved*

Name: MARC JUNE  
Address: 807 G ST, STE 150  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: LAURA FARLEY  
Address: 510 L ST STE 601  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Name of Case</i>	<i>Case Number</i>
<b>2</b> <u>LIPSCOMB V LIPSCOMB</u>	<u>3AN-98-4442CI</u>

*Attorneys Involved*

Name: JOAN CLOVER  
Address: 880 H ST, STE 201  
ANCHORAGE AK 99501

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: VINCENT VITALE  
Address: P.O. BOX 230747  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99523

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Name of Case</i>	<i>Case Number</i>
<b>3</b> <u>GOLDSTEIN V GOLDSTEIN</u>	<u>3AN-98-11622CI</u>

*Attorneys Involved*

Name: STEVEN PRADELL  
Address: 1009 W 7TH AVE  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: LINDA LIMON  
Address: 742 K ST  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Please list the names and case numbers of the three most recent cases which did not go to trial, but on which you did significant work (such as settlement conference, hearings, motion work, etc.), identify the attorneys involved, and show their current addresses. (Attach additional pages if necessary.)

<b><i>Name of Case</i></b>	<b><i>Case Number</i></b>
<b>1</b> MILLARD V DAVIS	3AN-98-4223CI

***Attorneys Involved***

Name: LARRY CAUDLE  
Address: 2525 BLUEBERRY STE 201  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99503

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: LARRY MOSER  
Address: 420 L STE STE 300  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

Name: WAYNE ROSS  
Address: 327 E FIREWEED, STE 200  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

<b><i>Name of Case</i></b>	<b><i>Case Number</i></b>
<b>2</b> ALPINE V HERMANSON	3AN-97-8536CI

***Attorneys Involved***

Name: ERIC BROWN  
Address: 3000 A ST, STE 300  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: STANLEY LEWIS  
Address: 2237 W 7TH AVE  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

<b><i>Name of Case</i></b>	<b><i>Case Number</i></b>
<b>3</b> JANE DOE V ST. OF AK/COURT	3AN-96-5455CI

***Attorneys Involved***

Name: SUZANNE LOMBARDI  
Address: 435 S DENALI  
PALMER AK 99645

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: BRIAN DOHERTY  
Address: 1029 W 3RD AVE, STE 500  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

8. If you deem it helpful to the Council, please list the name, case number and attorneys' names and current addresses of any other cases during your judicial career in which you believe your work was particularly noteworthy. (Attach additional pages if necessary.)

<i>Name of Case</i>	<i>Case Number</i>
<b>1</b> ASEA V STATE OF AK/APEA	3AN-99-8112CI

*Attorneys Involved*

Name: DON CLOCKSIN  
Address: 1601 COOPER POINT RD NW  
OLYMPIA WA 98502

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: JAMES GASPER  
Address: 3000 A ST, STE 300  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

Name: DAVID JONES  
Address: 1031 W 4TH AVE, STE 200  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

<i>Name of Case</i>	<i>Case Number</i>
<b>2</b> NEARY V UNIVERSAL MOTORS	3AN-96-6002CI

*Attorneys Involved*

Name: ROGER E HOLL  
Address: 1500 W 33RD AVE STE 100  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99503

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: SCOTT NORDSTRAND  
Address: 1500 W 33RD AVE STE 200  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99503

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Name of Case</i>	<i>Case Number</i>
<b>3</b> MCCLOTHLIN V MOA	3AN-96-9379CI

*Attorneys Involved*

Name: CHARLES COE  
Address: 805 W 3RD AVE, STE 100  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: SUSAN WEST  
Address: 510 L ST STE 700  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## ATTACHMENT

On December 14, 1999, I completed my fifteenth year on the Superior Court. Looking back at my experience, I feel privileged and honored to have been given the opportunity to serve the people of Alaska in this capacity for most of my legal career. My satisfaction with the position of being a Superior Court Judge is very high and I find myself just as excited as I was during my first year on the bench. I still look forward each and every day to going to work.

During my tenure on the Court, and because I have particular interests in the development of young people, I have been involved in programs that directly affect our youth. I was actively involved in the early stages of the development of the Anchorage Youth Program and directly participated in a number of years to see it grow to its position of national prominence. I have been an adjunct professor with the University of Alaska and taught courses in Civil Procedure and Domestic Relations. Upon invitation, I often participate in programs dealing with legal issues at local schools.

During the last six years, I have attended two continuing education programs at the University of Kansas involving a symposium on torts and a program dealing with economics in state courts. I have also attended programs at the Judicial College at Reno, Nevada, dealing with advanced evidence and complex medical issues in the courtroom.



## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Judicial Council Members  
**FROM:** Staff  
**DATE:** May 16, 2000  
**RE:** Comparison of Previous Survey Results - Rene J. Gonzalez

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Rene J. Gonzalez is standing for retention in 2000. The table on the following page compares retention and selection survey scores for Judge Gonzalez. Changes in the form and content of the various surveys should be noted carefully in making any comparisons.

Judge Gonzalez previously stood for retention as a superior court judge in 1988 and 1994. He was evaluated with the other non-retention judges in 1990, 1992 and 1998.

Judge Gonzalez applied for and was appointed to the Anchorage Superior Court in 1984.

<b>Judge Rene J. Gonzalez</b>													
appointed to Anchorage Superior Court 11/8/84													
	2000 Retention		1998 Retention Preview		1994 Retention		1992 Retention Preview		1990 Retention Preview		1988 Retention		1984 Anchorage Superior Score
	Bar	PPO	Bar	PPO	Bar	PPO	Bar	PPO	Bar	PPO	Bar	PPO	
<b>Legal Ability</b>	3.6	—	3.4	—	3.4	—	3.3	—	3.2	—	3.4	—	3.5
<b>Fairness</b>	4.0	3.6	3.9	3.1	3.9	3.1	3.8	3.0	3.8	3.2	3.9	2.7	3.7
<b>Integrity</b>	4.2	3.8	4.1	3.5	4.0	3.4	3.9	3.3	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.1	3.9
<b>Judicial Temperament</b>	4.0	3.6	4.0	3.4	4.0	3.4	3.8	3.3	4.0	3.5	4.1	3.1	3.7
<b>Diligence</b>	3.6	3.6	—	—	3.3	3.5	3.1	3.3	—	—	—	—	3.7
<b>Administrative Skills</b>	3.8	3.5	—	—	3.7	3.2	3.4	3.0	3.2	3.5	3.6	3.1	---
<b>Freedom from Arrogance</b>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3.7
<b>Decisiveness</b>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3.6
<b>Overall Performance</b>	3.7	3.5	3.7	3.1	3.5	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.3	3.2	3.5	2.8	3.6