

Olson Calls on Branstad to Hold Accountable His Appointees to Judicial Nominating Commission

Written by Norm Sterzenbach
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THURSDAY, AUGUST 29, 2013

Today, State Rep. and Gubernatorial Candidate Tyler Olson called on Governor Branstad to hold accountable his appointees to the Judicial Nominating Commission for their inappropriate, intrusive and offensive questioning of candidates for the Iowa Court of Appeals. "Governor Branstad needs to hold his appointees accountable for asking inappropriate questions that are not only offensive, but clearly violate the guidelines set for them," said Tyler Olson. "His failure to condemn these intrusive questions shows Iowans how he refuses to discipline - or even contradict - those in his administration who make mistakes or break the public trust. Why won't Governor Branstad take responsibility for the actions and voices of the right-wing appointees he's allowed to take over his administration?"

As reported by the AP, the Des Moines Register, Radio Iowa, and other outlets, two applicants for the Iowa Court of Appeals were asked inappropriate questions by members of Iowa Judicial Nominating Commission, one about her involvement in church and other as to whether she thought she was breaking 'covenant vows' made to her husband.

SOURCES:

Des Moines Register, Court of Appeals candidates quizzed on marriage, religion, 8/29/13

The question about covenant vows was made from nominating commissioner Scott Bailey, a vice president of the Network of Iowa Christian Home Educators from Otley, to Jeanie Vaudt, an assistant Iowa attorney general and a finalist to become an Iowa Court of Appeals judge.

The question about church involvement came from nominating commissioner Elizabeth Doll of Council Bluffs, who asked applicant Jennifer Miller to "comment on her methodology of

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choosing a place of worship.”

AP, Iowa judicial nominee quizzed on her marriage, 8/28/13

"The commission was created to vet judicial nominees based on their merit and not political factors. The handbook for commissioners warns that questions about marital status, a spouse's employment and religion are inappropriate. One example of such a question from the book is: "What does your spouse think about your being a judge?"

Radio Iowa, Candidate for Iowa Court of Appeals asked about her marriage to ex-state auditor, 8/27/13

One of the nominees for an opening on the Iowa Court of Appeals was asked during a public interview with the Iowa Judicial Nominating Commission if she was upholding the religious vows of her marriage after she raised the issue of her husband's out-of-state job.

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