

LAWYERS FOR ENDING THE “GENDER-DROUGHT” IN THE APPOINTMENT OF JUDGES TO THE FOURTH DCA

May 10, 2013

Via U.S. mail and email

Governor Rick Scott
Office of the Governor
State of Florida
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Re: *Eleven years seems long enough.....*

Dear Governor Scott:

As members, and as past and current leadership of the Palm Beach County and South Palm Beach County Chapters of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers, we are writing to you regarding a very serious concern that we have regarding the 11-year “gender drought” surrounding the appointment of new judges to the Fourth District Court of Appeal.

Since Governor Bush appointed the Honorable Melanie May to the Court back in 2002, **there has not been a single appointment of a woman judge** to sit on the Fourth District Court of Appeal (**out of six appointments** made), despite the JNC’s nomination of many eminently qualified women.

Certainly, as Governor, you have appointed some very qualified and talented jurists (as have your predecessors). Judges Damoorgian, Ciklin, Gerber, Levine, Conner, and Forst are all serving our District well.

However, as you prepare to appoint another judge to fill the seat vacated by the Honorable Mark Polen, we simply write to ask you to reflect on this “gender drought” before making the appointment. You, we imagine, are mindful that another vacancy will not likely exist on this Court for many years to come (in light of its current demographics), and to go 15 years or so without the appointment of a woman judge—inadvertent or not—seems a significant disservice to our community and the state overall.

We certainly do not suggest that gender is in any way a single criterion to use in appointing jurists. However, in order to represent the community in which the Court sits, and in light of the rather qualified and experienced women judges from which you have to choose, we would urge

Governor Rick Scott
May 10, 2013
Page 2

serious consideration be given to the long “gender-drought,” which has grown longer with each passing appointment.

We sincerely appreciate your time and consideration of this extremely important matter.

Respectfully submitted,

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