

VIEW MESSAGE

[Return to Saved Messages](#)

HTML Message



UNITED STATES SENATE

For Immediate Release
January 12, 2018

DURBIN, DUCKWORTH ANNOUNCE SCREENING COMMITTEE, APPLICATION PROCESS FOR FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT IN THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

CHICAGO - U.S. Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) today announced that they will begin accepting applications from those interested in serving as a Federal District Court Judge in the Northern District of Illinois. The Senators will be assisted by a screening committee whose task is to review and vet District Court candidates and advise the Senators regarding the candidates' qualifications and fitness for the position.

The Senators' screening committee in the Northern District of Illinois will be chaired by the Honorable David Coar (ret.), former U.S. District Court Judge for the Northern District of Illinois. The other members of the Northern District Committee are Alejandro Caffarelli, Michael Chu, Edward Feldman, Betty Jang, Monica Llorente, Laurie Mikva, Carlina Tapia-Ruano, Zaldwaynaka ("Z") Scott, and Diana White.

"As Senator Duckworth and I make recommendations for lifetime appointments to the federal district court bench in the Northern District of Illinois, we will benefit from the guidance and insights of our distinguished screening committee" said Durbin. "Making recommendations to the White House on federal nominees is one of the most important jobs I have as a U.S. Senator, and I thank the members of the screening committee for their willingness to serve."

"I take my constitutional responsibility to advise and consent seriously. The knowledge, insight and expertise of each screening committee member will be invaluable as Senator Durbin and I consider applicants to be Federal District Court Judge for the Northern District of Illinois," said Duckworth. "I thank each of the screening committee members for their commitment to serving the people of our state."

Biographies of each member of the screening committee can be found below.

Application Process:

Applicants for the federal district court must submit a resume and a completed copy of this [questionnaire](#) to applications@durbin.senate.gov **by 5 p.m. CT on Thursday, February 1, 2018**. Applicants are requested to incorporate their resume, completed questionnaire, and any attachments to the questionnaire into a single PDF document if possible.

The application questionnaire is nearly identical to those used by the Senate Judiciary Committee and will help provide insight into candidates' backgrounds and qualifications. The screening committee will review candidates and advise

the Senators, who will make recommendations on potential nominees to the President. Once the President submits a nomination to the U.S. Senate, the nominee will be reviewed by the Senate Judiciary Committee, of which Senator Durbin is a member, and will receive a vote in the Committee. The approval of both home state Senators is traditionally required for the Senate Judiciary Committee to take up and consider a judicial nominee. If a nomination is approved by the Judiciary Committee, the nomination will be sent to the full Senate for consideration.

Screening Committee for the Northern District of Illinois:

The Honorable David H. Coar (Ret.) (committee chair). Judge Coar served as a United States District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois for sixteen years, from 1994-2010. He had previously served the Northern District for eight years as a United States Bankruptcy Judge and for three years as a United States Bankruptcy Trustee. Judge Coar taught for over a decade at DePaul University College of Law as an Associate Professor of Law and additionally served as Associate Dean. He has also worked in private practice and as an arbitrator. Judge Coar received his B.A. from Syracuse University, his J.D. from Loyola University Law School, and his L.L.M. from Harvard Law School. He is a veteran of the United States Marine Corps Reserves.

Alejandro Caffarelli. Mr. Caffarelli is the founding shareholder of Caffarelli & Associates Ltd in Chicago. He is a former President of the National Employment Lawyers' Association - Illinois affiliate, as well as a former Executive Board member for the Hispanic Lawyers' Association of Illinois. In 2014, Mr. Caffarelli was appointed to the Pro Bono Advisory Committee for the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. Since 2005, Mr. Caffarelli has also volunteered to help indigent workers through the ARISE-Chicago community organization, and currently serves on the ARISE Legal Advisory Board. Mr. Caffarelli received his B.A. from the University of Michigan and J.D. from the University of Minnesota.

Michael Chu. Mr. Chu is a partner at the Chicago office of McDermott Will & Emery. Mr. Chu is the board chair of Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Chicago and was the former president of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (2004-2005). He is the current board chair of the Chicago Committee on Minorities in Large Law Firms and chair of the Chicago Illini Leadership Council. He received his B.S. from the University of Illinois in 1989 and his J.D. from the William and Mary Law School in 1992.

Edward Feldman. Mr. Feldman is a partner at the Chicago law firm Miller Shakman & Beem, where he has worked since 1988. His practice focuses on complex civil litigation and professional responsibility matters. He previously served as law clerk to U.S. District Judge Marvin E. Aspen and then worked for two years as a clinical fellow at the Northwestern University Legal Clinic. He has served as an adjunct law professor at Northwestern since 1988 teaching trial advocacy and ethics. He is a past Chair of the Chicago Bar Association Professional Responsibility Committee and of the Board of Directors for the Chicago Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights. He received his B.A./B.S. from the University of Illinois and his J.D. from Harvard Law School.

Betty Jang. Ms. Jang is a former executive of a publicly-traded healthcare company. Previously, she has provided legal counsel at several Fortune 250 corporations, taught as an adjunct professor at the University of Illinois law school, and has served as an assistant public defender with the Office of the Cook County Public Defender. Ms. Jang is currently a mentor at 1871, an alumnus of the United State of Women's Galvanize Chicago Program, and has held numerous positions in local, state, and national bar associations. She received her B.A. from the University of Illinois and her J.D. from Chicago-Kent College of Law.

Monica L. Llorente. Ms. Llorente teaches at Northwestern University's Pritzker School of Law and the Weinberg College of Arts & Sciences. She has served as an advocate for children's rights in several national campaigns and has represented children in need in various judicial and administrative proceedings. She is currently the Education Co-Chair of the ABA Children's Rights Litigation Committee. Ms. Llorente has also served as a board member of the Hispanic Lawyers Association of Illinois. Before working at Northwestern, she practiced law at Baker & McKenzie in Chicago. She received her A.B. from Duke University and her J.D. from the Northwestern Pritzker School of Law.

Laurie Mikva. Ms. Mikva is a clinical assistant professor at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law. She previously worked as an attorney at the Illinois Department of Employment Security and the Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, and also served as an assistant public defender in the Champaign County Public Defender's Office and the Office of the Maryland Public Defender, Appellate Division. She is a Commissioner on the Illinois Court of Claims, and she also serves on the Board of Directors for the Legal Services Corporation and on the American Bar Association Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service. She received her B.A. from Beloit College and her J.D. from New York University School of Law.

Carlina Tapia-Ruano. Ms. Tapia-Ruano is the principal and founder of the Chicago office of Tapia-Ruano & Gunn PC. She has practiced in the field of immigration law for over thirty years, focusing on family and employment matters. She is a former president of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and chair of the Chicago Bar Association Section on Immigration Law. Ms. Tapia-Ruano has taught as an adjunct professor at IIT-Chicago Kent School of Law and DePaul University College of Law. She received her B.A. from Illinois Wesleyan University and J.D. from DePaul University College of Law.

Zaldwaynaka ("Z") Scott. Ms. Scott is currently a partner in the Chicago office of Foley & Lardner LLP. From 1987 to 2003, she worked as a federal criminal prosecutor in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Illinois, serving in various management positions including Chief of the General Crimes Section. After her service at the U.S.

Attorney's Office, she served as Executive Inspector General for the Office of Governor of Illinois (2003-05). She also served for four years in the Office of the Corporation Counsel for the City of Chicago (1983-87). She has taught as an adjunct instructor at Northwestern University School of Law, the University of Chicago Law School, and The John Marshall School of Law. She received her B.S. from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign and her J.D. from the Indiana University School of Law-Bloomington.

Diana White. Ms. White worked at LAF (formerly the Legal Assistance Foundation) for more than 20 years, 10 of them as LAF's Executive Director. She retired in July 2017. LAF is the largest provider of free legal services in civil cases in the metropolitan Chicago area. LAF's full-time staff of more than 100 attorneys and paralegals provides legal help that gets people living in poverty back on their feet and strengthens communities throughout Cook County. Previously Ms. White was a partner at Jenner & Block and a law clerk to Judge Walter Cummings on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit.