



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Judicial Inquiry and Review Commission

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December 1, 2009

REPORT TO THE VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

In accordance with Section 17.1-905 of the Code of Virginia, the Judicial Inquiry and Review Commission makes the following report concerning its activities during the past twelve months:

1. The Commission maintains statistical information on all incoming complaints, telephone calls and correspondence. Complaints and inquiries are separated into categories indicating the source, the nature of the complaint or inquiry, and whether a violation of the Canons of Judicial Conduct was alleged. The statistics are attached and made a part of this report.

2. The Commission's 2009 statistical report also includes: the number of times during the year that the Commission issued formal charges against a judge; the number of formal hearings conducted; the number of suspensions; the number of informal meetings with judges to discuss complaints; the number of cases in which Commission findings were reported to the General Assembly; and the number of formal complaints filed in the Supreme Court of Virginia.

3. Pamphlets describing the function of the Commission are widely available to the public. They are distributed to all the Clerks' offices of General District, Juvenile, and Circuit Courts. The pamphlet explains how complaints are initiated, the confidential nature of Commission proceedings, and the array of dispositions available to the Commission. Similar pamphlets specifically aimed at lawyers also have been distributed widely to members of the bar.

4. Information concerning the Commission also is available on the Internet on the home page of the Supreme Court of Virginia. The Commission's Rules, the Canons of Judicial Conduct and complaint forms are accessible on the website.

Report to the Virginia General Assembly

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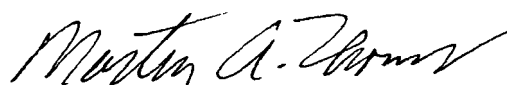
December 1, 2009

5. Commission Counsel provides informal ethics advice to Virginia judges on a daily basis. During the past twelve months, Counsel responded to more than 450 such requests.

6. The Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee responds to requests from judges for formal opinions concerning whether proposed future conduct complies with the Canons of Judicial Conduct. Commission staff continues to provide administrative support for this Committee. Information concerning the Ethics Committee and an index of the Committee's formal opinions also are available on the Internet.

7. The Commission presents educational programs concerning judicial ethics. The Commission participated in ethics training sessions for new judges and at the mandatory judicial conferences. Commission staff also held training programs for substitute judges during November in Abingdon, Alexandria, Henrico, Salem, Suffolk, and Weyer's Cave.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Martin A. Thomas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Martin A. Thomas
Chairman

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Enclosure

JUDICIAL INQUIRY AND REVIEW COMMISSION
December 1, 2008 to November 30, 2009

Judges subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission	787
State Corporation Commission Judges	3
Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission	3

Written inquiries received	Nature of written inquiry
Attorneys	Ruling/decision
Judges	Ex parte
Court employees	Bias or prejudice
General public	Delay
Litigants	Rude behavior
Victims	Failure to follow the law
Inmates	Ethics opinion
Media	How to file
Other	Other
471	754

Telephone inquiries received	Nature of telephone inquiry
Attorneys	Ruling/decision
Judges	Ex parte
Court employees	Bias or prejudice
General public	Delay
Litigants	Rude behavior
Victims	Failure to follow the law
Inmates	Ethics opinion
Media	How to file
Other	Other
In Person	
961	1234

Files opened upon the complaint of	Commission Dispositions
Attorney	Informal meetings
Litigant	No further action
Judge	Dismissed
Inmate	Suspensions
Court Staff	Formal charges
Commission	Formal hearings
Victims	Canons breached
Other	Findings reported to General Assembly
	Supreme Court complaints
	Retired
	Resigned
	Pending
TOTAL	20

Recusals	
Staff	0
Commission	3