

April 24, 2012

The Honorable Jason Smith  
Chairman of the Special Standing Committee on Judicial Reform  
201 West Capitol Avenue, Room 302-1  
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Dear Representative Smith and Members of the Special Standing Committee on Judicial Reform:

On behalf of the Columbia Chamber of Commerce and our 1200 member businesses, we encourage you to protect Missouri's Non-Partisan Court Plan.

At a recent meeting of the Chamber's Government Affairs Committee, we discussed options in regards to the current plan. After discussion, the Government Affairs Committee voted to support the existing Missouri Non-Partisan Court Plan. That recommendation was unanimously adopted by the Columbia Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors at its meeting on April 20, 2012.

For the business community, the non-partisan court plan means stability and predictability in the judicial system. That stability is essential to ensure a positive business climate, which is our mission. The "Missouri Plan" has been a model system for the nation and has been adopted in 34 other states. Most important to our members, the "Missouri Plan" eliminates partisan politics and insidious levels of campaign-fundraising. We believe our system is better able to produce competent and qualified judges, making it more stable, efficient and consistent.

The Columbia Chamber of Commerce fully supports Missouri's Non-Partisan Court Plan and we respectfully request that your committee refuse to support any legislative change that would undermine or compromise Missouri's existing judicial selection process.

Sincerely,

Vicki Russell, Chair of the Board  
Columbia Chamber of Commerce

## **Chamber Supports Missouri's Non-Partisan Court Plan**

At a recent meeting of the Chamber's Government Affairs Committee, members discussed proposed changes to Missouri Non-Partisan Court Plan. After discussion, the Government Affairs Committee voted to support the existing Missouri Non-Partisan Court Plan. That recommendation was unanimously supported by the Columbia Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors at their April 20, 2012 meeting.

For the business community, the non-partisan court plan means stability and predictability in the judicial system. That is important to ensure a positive, pro-business climate which we strongly support. The current system is proven to work in Missouri as well as 35 states and we believe that it leads to a quality judicial system. Most importantly to our members, it is intended to eliminate partisan politics and campaign fundraising from the judicial selection process. We believe that this system is more likely to produce competent and qualified judges, making our court system more stable, efficient and consistent.

The Columbia Chamber of Commerce supports Missouri's Non-Partisan Court Plan as the most efficient method of judicial selection in Missouri.