

LETTER FROM RETIRED SUPERIOR COURT JUDGES OF WASHINGTON STATE

**JUDGE JEFFREY RAMSDELL (RET.)
PO Box 75321, SEATTLE, WA 98175**

May 1, 2023

The Honorable John G. Roberts, Jr.
Chief Justice
Supreme Court of the United States
1 First Street NE
Washington, DC 20543

Dear Chief Justice Roberts:

We are retired Washington State Superior Court Judges writing to express our grave concerns regarding recent developments at the United States Supreme Court. Prompt, transparent and effective resolution of these issues is not only imperative to the continued credibility and vitality of the Supreme Court itself, but to all levels of the judiciary.

The vast majority of the public has little understanding of or appreciation for the various levels of court or their jurisdictional divisions. For most people, a judge is a judge regardless of court level, jurisdiction or whether their title is actually "justice" rather than judge. Rightly or wrongly, the standard set by any one of us is often imputed to all of us. The likelihood of that imputation is even greater when the standard is set by those entrusted with the highest stature.

All of us strove every day of our careers to exemplify the highest level of allegiance to our oaths of office, to administer justice fairly and impartially and to comply with our code of ethics. Attention to these goals was not only important to our professional reputations but was essential to maintain the continued effectiveness of the judicial branch of government. Courts are powerless but for the respect accorded the institution by the public and the other branches of government. Apocryphal or not, President Andrew Jackson's purported statement, "John Marshall has made his decision, now let him enforce it," embodies this reality.

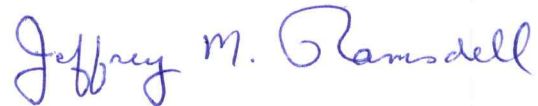
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The Supreme Court is faced with a choice. It can take public remedial action or it can choose to maintain an air of insularity in the hope that the crisis will pass. For the sake of the institution that we all served and cherish, we respectfully urge you to exercise your authority as Chief Justice and take appropriate action that will restore the public's trust and confidence in the Supreme Court and, by extrapolation, all courts. Rest assured that the legacy of your response will be felt at every level of court for decades to come.

Respectfully submitted,



Judge Jeffrey M. Ramsdell (Ret.)

Cc: Justice Clarence Thomas
Justice Samuel Alito
Justice Sonia Sotomayor
Justice Elena Kagan
Justice Neil Gorsuch
Justice Brett Kavanaugh
Justice Amy Coney Barrett
Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson

The following retired Washington State Superior Court Judges join in this letter:

Judge Michael J. Trickey (Ret.)
King County Superior Court
Court of Appeals, Division I

Justice Bobbe Bridge (Ret.)
King County Superior Court
Washington State Supreme Court

Judge Deborah Fleck (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Leonard Costello (Ret.)
Kitsap County Superior Court

Judge Laura Inveen (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Kathleen O'Connor (Ret.)
Spokane County Superior Court

Judge Michael Downes (Ret.)
Snohomish County Superior Court

Judge Richard McDermott (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

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Judge Vickie Churchill (Ret.)
Island County Superior Court

Judge Kitty Ann van Doorninck (Ret.)
Pierce County Superior Court

Judge Michael Spearman (Ret.)
King County Superior Court
Court of Appeals, Division I

Judge Tari Eitzen (Ret.)
Spokane County Superior Court

Judge Charles Snyder (Ret.)
Whatcom County Superior Court

Judge James Cayce (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Anthony Wartnik (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Theresa Doyle (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge David Kurtz (Ret.)
Snohomish County Superior Court

Judge Thomas Wynne (Ret.)
Snohomish County Superior Court

Judge Susan Serko (Ret.)
Pierce County Superior Court

Judge Diane Woolard (Ret.)
Clark County Superior Court

Judge Stephanie Arend (Ret.)
Pierce County Superior Court

Judge Harold Clarke (Ret.)
Spokane County Superior Court

Judge James Murphy (Ret.)
Spokane County Superior Court

Justice Faith Ireland (Ret.)
King County Superior Court
Washington State Supreme Court

Judge Stephen Warning (Ret.)
Cowlitz County Superior Court

Judge Carol Schapira (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Philip G. Hubbard, Jr. (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Ellen Clark (Ret.)
Spokane County Superior Court

Judge John Erlick (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Helen Halpert (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Michael Rickert (Ret.)
Skagit County Superior Court

Judge David Frazier (Ret.)
Whitman County Superior Court

Judge Kathleen Learned (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Larry Jordan (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

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Judge John M. Meyer (Ret.)
Skagit County Superior Court

Judge Vickie Hogan (Ret.)
Pierce County Superior Court

Judge Gregory Sypolt (Ret.)
Spokane County Superior Court

Judge Linda Tompkins (Ret.)
Spokane County Superior Court

Judge Gordon Godfrey (Ret.)
Grays Harbor County Superior Court

Judge Barbara Linde (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Stephen Brown (Ret.)
Grays Harbor Superior Court

Judge Mariane Spearman (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Anne Hirsch (Ret.)
Thurston County Superior Court

Judge Paula Casey (Ret.)
Thurston County Superior Court

Judge Jean Rietschel (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Suzanne Barnett (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Barbara Mack (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Greg Canova (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Dan Berschauer (Ret.)
Thurston County Superior Court

Judge Deborra Garrett (Ret.)
Whatcom County Superior Court

Judge Monica Benton (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge John Strohmaier (Ret.)
Lincoln County Superior Court

Judge Michael Heavey (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge John Hotchkiss (Ret.)
Douglas County Superior Court

Judge S. Brooke Taylor (Ret.)
Clallam County Superior Court

Judge Christopher Melly (Ret.)
Clallam County Superior Court

Judge Lesley Allan (Ret.)
Chelan County Superior Court

Judge Michael Fox (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Kimberly Prochnau (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge James J. Stonier (Ret.)
Cowlitz County Superior Court

Judge Jay White (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Mark McCauley (Ret.)
Grays Harbor County Superior Court

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Judge Ron Culpepper (Ret.)
Pierce County Superior Court

Judge Erik Rohrer (Ret.)
Clallam County Superior Court

Judge Kathryn Nelson (Ret.)
Pierce County Superior Court

Judge Alicia Nakata (Ret.)
Chelan County Superior Court

Judge Ron Castleberry (Ret.)
Snohomish County Superior Court

Judge John McCarthy (Ret.)
Pierce County Superior Court

Judge Linda Krese (Ret.)
Snohomish County Superior Court

Judge Alan Hancock (Ret.)
Island County Superior Court

Judge George T. Mattson (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Terry Sebring (Ret.)
Pierce County Superior Court

Judge John Lohrmann (Ret.)
Walla Walla Superior Court

Judge Keith Harper (Ret.)
Jefferson County Superior Court

Judge James Orlando (Ret.)
Pierce County Superior Court

Judge Toni Sheldon (Ret.)
Mason County Superior Court

Judge Julie Spector (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Susan Craighead (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge George Bowden (Ret.)
Snohomish County Superior Court

Judge Elizabeth Martin (Ret.)
Pierce County Superior Court

Judge Linda Lau (Ret.)
King County Superior Court
Court of Appeals, Division I

Judge Regina Cahan (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Harriett M. Cody (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Cheryl Carey (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Donald Eaton (Ret.)
San Juan County Superior Court

Judge David Draper (Ret.)
Lewis County Superior Court

Judge Craig Matheson (Ret.)
Benton/Franklin Superior Court

Judge Harry McCarthy (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

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Judge Dean Lum (Ret.)
King County Superior Court

Judge Christopher E. Culp (Ret.)
Okanogan Superior Court

Judge Scott Collier (Ret.)
Clark County Superior Court

Judge John R. Ruhl (Ret.)
King County Superior Court