



GREATER
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October 5, 1994

The Honorable Frank Dermody
Chairman
Pennsylvania House Subcommittee on Courts
Room 646, City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

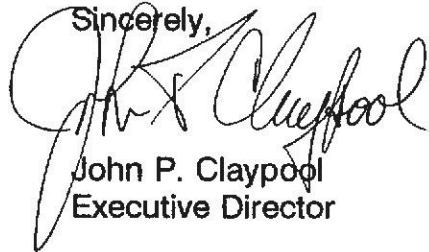
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Dear Representative Dermody:

Greater Philadelphia First (GPF) is an association of business chief executives from 32 of the region's larger corporations intent on advancing the interests of the community. Your subcommittee's hearings in Philadelphia on judicial reform provide an important forum for concerned citizens and groups to express their views. GPF's Board of Directors adopted the attached policy statement of its views on judicial reform at its meeting on September 30. On behalf of GPF, I respectfully request that you include the statement in the record of your hearings.

Sincerely,

John P. Claypool
Executive Director

attachment

cc: Samuel A. McCullough

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JUDICIAL REFORM

POLICY POSITION Greater Philadelphia First

September, 1994

The quality of state and local government and the growth of the state's and region's economy are continuing priorities of Greater Philadelphia First (GPF). We believe that partisan election of appellate judges severely compromises the independence and integrity of the judiciary in Pennsylvania and adversely affects the caliber of our government.

GPF further believes that Pennsylvania needs to attract and retain businesses to improve economic opportunity for its citizens. To help do so, we must have high-quality appellate courts with professionally competent judges whose decisions are impartial and not subject to the influence of special interest groups that largely finance their election campaigns. Pennsylvanians and those seeking to locate here must have the fullest confidence in the state's judiciary.

Finally, GPF believes that Pennsylvania's appellate courts should more accurately reflect the geographic diversity of the state and not just the election results of the best-organized, biggest-city political "machines."

Therefore, Greater Philadelphia First strongly supports:

Merit Selection for Pennsylvania's Appellate Courts

To achieve this goal, GPF favors:

- the early 1995 reconsideration and passage of a merit selection bill by Pennsylvania's General Assembly; to be followed by the bill's passage again in 1997, as required by the constitution, and placement on the ballot for consideration by voters in 1997; and
- the addition to such a bill of a regional selection plan guaranteeing geographical balance on the appellate courts while retaining the key elements of a merit selection system.

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