



## **REAFFIRMATION OF POSITION STATEMENT ON MERIT SELECTION OF APPELLATE JUDGES (Previously Approved in 1984 and 1996)**

### **BACKGROUND:**

There are many factors that contribute to a state's favorable or unfavorable business climate, but one factor that gets little attention is the method of choosing statewide judges.

The Commonwealth's current process of electing appellate court judges creates an environment that can lead to inefficient and biased justice. One of the primary problems is that information available to voters concerning statewide judicial candidates is extremely limited. Even well-informed and committee voters have little idea of the qualifications or positions on issues of the judges for whom they are voting.

Businesses want a fair and efficient judicial system comprised of appellate court judges who have demonstrated the experience, independence, integrity and competence necessary to serve on the bench and who have adhered to the highest standards of judicial conduct.

The Lancaster Chamber has long been supportive of efforts that would pave the way for merit selection of the state's appellate judges by amending the state Constitution to institute a fair selection process based on the qualifications of each judicial candidate.

The merit selection process would promote stability and impartiality in our courts. This is critical to the business community, as it ensures that proper scrutiny is given to decisions that affect the very existence of a business and the jobs it creates. Employers recognize that a stable court system is essential to the creation of a favorable environment to invest, hire and grow.

### **POLICY POSITION:**

**The Lancaster Chamber of Commerce & Industry reaffirms support for a proposal to establish a bipartisan panel that would recommend qualified candidates to the Governor, who would then appoint the judge and make him/her subject to Senate confirmation.**

It is the belief of The Chamber that a constitutional amendment providing for merit selection of judges would help to insure fairness to all.

Previous position statements were approved by the Board of Directors in 1984 and 1996.  
Approved by the Advocacy Committee on 3.4.16.  
Approved by the Board of Directors on 3.15.16.