

## Better Courts Run Misleading Ads in Central Missouri to Garner Support for Elimination of Non-Partisan Court Plan

### Text of Ad

No one knows what goes on behind closed doors.

That was a big hit for Charlie Rich in '73 but it is a big problem for Missouri today. You see Missouri is stuck with a highly political behind closed doors scheme to select our highest court judges. Accountable to no one and dominated by elite lawyers, an unelected committee picks those judges with no public oversight. Letting the foxes pick who guards the chicken coop is dangerous for chickens and letting our judges be picked in secret is dangerous for you. Now some sensible reforms can solve the problem and select our high court judges out in the open. But some lawyers want to keep things secret. That's wrong. Call 573-751-3659. Tell your legislators to support selecting our judges out in the open, not behind closed doors. That's 573-751-3659. Paid for by Better Courts for Missouri. On the web at NewMissouriPlan.com.

### Misleading Claims

Misleading claim 1. *You see Missouri is stuck with a highly political behind closed doors scheme to select our highest court judges.*

Fact:

The Non-Partisan Court Plan is the least political method of selecting judges. That's why it's strongly supported by a [coalition of groups](#) that represent several million Missourians. Better Courts for Missouri won't even list their members, but apparently is composed of a group of less than five individuals.

Misleading claim 2. *Accountable to no one and dominated by elite lawyers, an unelected committee picks those judges with no public oversight.*

Fact:

Appellate Judicial Commission members consist of three non-lawyers selected by the governor, three lawyers elected by other lawyers in their Court of Appeals district and a judge from the Supreme Court of Missouri. All lawyers receive ballots to vote for the Commission member from their district. The names of the three lawyers forwarded to the governor are made public and the public is welcome to let the governor know their preferences.

Misleading claim 3. *“letting our judges be picked in secret is dangerous for you.”*

Fact:

Part of the selection process is confidential. The governor and legislature rely on the same confidentiality when screening candidates for public positions in the other two branches of government. When the Commission members vote, it is a secret ballot, which preserves each Commissioner's independence, protecting the process from undue political influence. Interviews are also confidential.

Misleading claim 4. *“Now some sensible reforms can solve the problem.”*

Fact:

HJR 49 is not a “sensible reform.” It is a plan to increase the role of partisan politics in selecting judges.

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