

Madison County Board Members Endorse John Barberis in Candidacy for Illinois Supreme Court

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EDWARDSVILLE - Several Republican Madison County Board members gathered on the courthouse steps for a photo on Wednesday. They were joined in the photo by other county and township elected officials, including Madison County Treasurer, Chris Slusser, to send a clear message that they are endorsing Appellate Court Justice John Barberis in his candidacy for Illinois Supreme Court. The group was reacting to the announcement on Tuesday that Madison County Board Chairman, Kurt Prenzler, announced he was supporting Barberis' opponent in the primary election next month.

According to former Madison County Republican Chairman, Jeremy Plank, the Republican party does not endorse candidates in the primary election. "Unlike the democrats who endorse preferred candidates we typically let voters make up their own

mind and stay out of contested primaries. I think the county board members wanted to make sure that republicans throughout Madison County understand that Chairman Prenzler is expressing a personal endorsement and not that of the county board or the county party.”

County board member, and republican candidate for Circuit Clerk, Tom McRae, said that he and the majority of his fellow republican board members felt compelled to publicly support Judge Barberis. “Republican Board members were shocked that Chairman Prenzler would endorse anyone other than Judge Barberis. Justice Barberis is a true conservative. He is pro-second amendment, pro-life and pro-common sense.”

County board member, and republican candidate for Auditor, David Michael, of Highland joined those supporting Barberis. “I’m incredibly proud to endorse Justice Barberis. He has the support of many of us who consider ourselves grassroots conservatives” said Michael.

Current Republican Supreme Court Justice Lloyd Karmeier, who was swept into office in 2004 during the medical malpractice crisis that forced many physicians to flee Madison and St. Clair Counties, announced his retirement earlier this year. In his tenure on the State’s highest court, Justice Karmeier has served the 37 counties located in the Fifth District, including Madison and St. Clair. Justice Karmeier has not publicly endorsed either candidate to succeed him.

“Madison County is where I was born and raised and where I’m raising my own family, and I have my judicial chambers in Madison County as well,” said Barberis. Justice Barberis served as a circuit court judge in Madison County until he was elected to serve on the Fifth District Appellate Court in November 2016. He was the first Republican elected to the circuit court of Madison County in over 100 years and the first Republican elected to the Fifth District Appellate Court in over 36 years.

Justice Barberis is currently in the fourth year of his ten-year term on the appellate court. “I am humbled to have so many locally elected officials turn out on a cold rainy day to endorse my candidacy for the Supreme Court.”