



# Madison County GOP Endorses Barberis for IL Supreme Court

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On Wednesday, March 4, the Madison County Republican Central Committee voted to endorse Justice John Barberis for Illinois Supreme Court.

A special meeting was held in Edwardsville for Precinct Committeeman from throughout Madison County to endorse one of the two Appellate Court Justices who are running in the GOP primary for the Illinois Supreme Court to be held on March 17th. Justice John Barberis, who lives in rural Madison County, is running against Justice David Overstreet of Jefferson County.

According to Madison County GOP Chairman, Ray Wesley, county-wide endorsements are unusual. “We rarely endorse candidates in the primary. Our bylaws require a two-thirds majority vote by committeemen to win an endorsement. It is purposefully very difficult. Our committeemen felt this race was too important to the future of Illinois to sit this one out.”

“The endorsement of the Madison County Republican Party is the ‘crown jewel’ of endorsements in this race,” said Barberis. “The 5<sup>th</sup> District covers 37 counties, yet more than 30% of the vote in this primary election comes from Madison County alone. I’m very excited to have this support with less than 2 weeks to go until the March 17<sup>th</sup> election.”

An opening on Illinois’s highest court occurred when Supreme Court Justice Lloyd Karmeier announced his intention to retire last November. Karmeier was elected to the Supreme Court in 2004 during the medical malpractice crisis that forced many Illinois doctors to leave the state. His election to the Supreme Court was hailed by many conservatives as stemming the tide of physician exodus. Karmeier narrowly survived a brutal retention campaign in 2014 financed by asbestos and personal injury attorneys who spent millions of dollars on negative ads in an effort seeking to oust him.

Madison County board member and candidate for Circuit Clerk, Tom McRae, was among those who voted for Barberis at the meeting. “Many voters tend to ignore the judicial elections because they are low profile and most often judges are listed near the bottom of the ballot,” said McRae. “They may be the most important people we vote for and get the least attention. Justice Barberis is a true conservative and constitutionalist”.

Madison County Treasurer, Chris Slusser who also voted to endorse Barberis echoed McRae’s comments. “We can count on Justice Barberis to uphold our constitutionally protected freedoms, like our Second Amendment rights and the rights of the unborn,” Slusser said. “He has a common-sense track record of interpreting the law in a fair and unbiased way for all parties”.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Judicial District includes 37 counties with the most populous being Madison and St Clair counties. The GOP nominee will square off against liberal Appellate Court Justice Judy Cates, who is running unopposed in the Democrat primary.

“I’m thrilled to have the endorsement of my home county,” said Barberis. “It is the greatest privilege of my life to serve my neighbors, friends and family on the Appellate Court. I would be honored to serve them on the Supreme Court with the values and convictions that have guided me my entire life”.