



# **ISBA Recommends 3rd Judicial Circuit Associate Judge Clarence W. Harrison II**

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ISBA releases downstate bar surveys

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To replace one judge, choose another.

That's the message members of the Illinois State Bar Association in the Metro East area sent when they recommended 3rd Judicial Circuit Associate Judge Clarence W. Harrison II over attorney John B. Barberis Jr. for a Madison County circuit judgeship.

The two are vying for the position that opened up after former chief judge Ann Callis stepped down to run as a Democrat for Congress in the 13th District against incumbent U.S. Rep. Rodney Davis.

More than 93 percent of survey respondents said Harrison – an associate judge since 1999 – “meets acceptable requirements for the office,” while a little less than 24 percent said the same for Barberis, who is based in St. Jacob.

Candidates who receive 65 percent or more “yes” answers to that criterion are deemed “recommended.” Harrison said today that the positive rating is especially meaningful for him.

“As a judge, as you can imagine, we don’t get very much in the way of feedback – particularly positive feedback for those of us who sit in family court,” he said.

“So it’s particularly important to see that our peers and the people that are regularly appearing in front of us do appreciate the job we’re doing and do recognize how much time and effort is put in.”

Barberis runs his own firm, the Law Office of John B. Barberis Jr. He ran unsuccessfully for Madison County circuit clerk in 2012.

He could not be reached for comment.

Harrison, whose father Moses W. Harrison II was an Illinois Supreme Court justice from 1992 until 2002, said his primary assignments now are custody and marriage disputes but that he has done many different types of cases.

He’s running as a Democrat, while Barberis is the Republican nominee.

The two are squaring off in an area that’s been the lone democratic stronghold outside of Chicago in recent elections.

But despite their different political persuasions, Harrison said the two know each other from Barberis’ time as an assistant state’s attorney.

So, how will the two stay on friendly terms through the heat of election season?

“I guess you’re just very careful,” Harrison said.

The ISBA surveys were released last week along with evaluations of Supreme Court and appellate justice candidates.

The only Supreme Court justice facing retention, Lloyd A. Karmeier, was “recommended” by the Judicial Evaluations Committee; the appellate court candidates facing retention were all “recommended” as well.

Two justices who were appointed to appellate seats but are now running for the first time – 2nd District Justice Michael J. Burke and 4th District Justice Lisa Holder White were rated ‘highly qualified.’

Richard D. Felice, president of the ISBA, could not be reached for comment. In a statement preleased with the evaluations, he said the reason they are done is to help voters who may not know much about judiciary elections.

“Voters often have difficulty learning about the qualifications of candidates for judicial office,” he said “The ratings are based on the views of the candidates’ peers, and I encourage voters to consider them when deciding how to vote on November 4.”