



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

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Governor Rell Names Westport's Bernhard to Judicial Review Council

Governor M. Jodi Rell today named G. Kenneth Bernhard of Westport to serve on the state's Judicial Review Council. Bernhard, an attorney and former state representative, will serve a term ending December 1, 2006.

"I'm very pleased to nominate Ken to this important post," Governor Rell said. "Ken is a man of integrity and has a tremendous knowledge of state government and the law. I am confident he will be an excellent addition to the Council."

The Judicial Review Council investigates complaints against judges, workers' compensation commissioners, and family support magistrates and makes recommendations regarding their reappointment and, in the case of judges, appointment to a different court. The council can admonish, censure, or suspend any of them for up to one year or recommend to the Supreme Court a longer suspension or removal from office.

Judges, commissioners, and magistrates can be disciplined for, among other things, prejudicial conduct, violation of ethics and financial rules, neglect or incompetence, failure to perform duties, conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude, or temperament adverse to justice.

The council consists of 12 regular members and 13 alternates appointed by the governor with the General Assembly's approval. The 12 regular members are three judges, three attorneys, and six people who are neither. The alternates consist of judges, attorneys, and other people who serve when a regular council member is disqualified and compensation commission and family support magistrate members to serve when the council is considering complaints against commissioners or magistrates.

The council must investigate complaints and, if it finds probable cause, hold hearings. Its proceedings are, for the most part, confidential unless the subject of the investigation wants them public. But if the council finds probable cause and holds a hearing, it must be public. The accused official has a number of due process rights such as legal representation and the ability to present evidence and confront witnesses.

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