

STATE COURT

**JUSTICE**

PROJECT

# STATE OF THE STATE SUPREME COURTS REPORT

**2023**



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This report examines the landscape of state supreme courts across the nation as they decide urgent cases that affect every one of our fundamental rights. While attention to the judiciary is often primarily directed toward the essential work of our federal courts, it is our state courts and state judges that hear the vast majority of cases in the country. These courts serve as an essential defense of our most important rights, including healthcare and reproductive rights, education access and equity, LGBTQ+ rights, voting rights, and much more. Unlike our federal courts, voters throughout the country have the critical opportunity to directly vote for the judges that sit on our state courts. Accordingly, it is essential to be informed about the way these courts are structured, who sits on them, how they are selected, and the decisions that they are making.

This report details the current composition of state supreme courts in all fifty states and analyzes key developments from the 2022 election cycle, in addition to important recent state supreme court appointments. This report also examines state supreme court elections in 2023 and 2024 that will have significant implications on the state of democracy for years to come. Lastly, the report highlights notable recent state supreme court cases, detailing a sampling of the wide-ranging impact of state judiciaries on the foundations of our rights and democracy.

As a spectrum of fundamental rights are currently at stake at both the state and federal levels, Alliance for Justice Action Campaign (AFJ Action Campaign) has advocated for the election and appointment of highly qualified, demographically and professionally diverse state court judges who will uphold equal justice for all. Understanding, protecting, and transforming our state courts is more essential than ever in this fight.



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## INTRODUCTION

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State courts are the workhorses of the American judicial system, playing a critical role in protecting our fundamental rights, now more than ever. While the federal courts dominate much of our political discourse, it is our state supreme courts that are often the final arbiters of key human rights. State courts hear the majority of cases in the United States—95% of lawsuits are filed in state court, establishing wide-ranging precedent and constituting over 100 million cases annually.

Voters throughout the country choose their justices and have the opportunity to influence their state supreme courts. While many people feel helpless in the face of the US Supreme Court’s sharp rightward turn and ultra-conservative packing of the lower federal courts, state courts are responsible for interpreting state constitutions that often grant more rights and protections than the federal Constitution. While it may not be a major election year, in 2023 two states will have supreme court elections. In 2024, 32 states have supreme court elections. These races are critical as these courts make decisions concerning reproductive rights, labor, healthcare, immigration, the environment, and countless other important issues. It is imperative that these benches are occupied by highly qualified judges who will uphold and protect our fundamental rights.

The urgency of state courts and state law is not new. Over sixty years ago, in his dissent in *Monroe v. Pape*, US Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter wrote, “The jurisdiction which Article III of the Constitution conferred on the national judiciary reflected the assumption that the state courts, not the federal courts, would remain the primary guardians of that fundamental security of person and property.”<sup>1</sup> US Supreme Court Justice William Brennan echoed this principle in 1977, writing that without “the independent protective force of state law ... the full realization of our liberties cannot be guaranteed.”<sup>2</sup> In a post-*Dobbs* America, where even long-established rights are now at risk, the role that state courts play is particularly pressing.

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1: *Monroe v. Pape*, 365 US 167, 237 (1961) (Frankfurter, J., dissenting).

2: William J. Brennan, Jr., *State Constitutions and the Protection of Individual Rights*, 90 Harv. L. Rev. 489 (1977).

It is within this context that AFJ Action Campaign launched its state courts initiative in 2020, running campaigns supporting successful state supreme court candidates Jill Karofsky in Wisconsin and Bridget McCormack and Elizabeth Welch in Michigan. Over the last two years, AFJ Action Campaign's state courts team has doubled in size and doubled down on our efforts to educate voters on the process and importance of qualified diverse judges on state supreme courts.

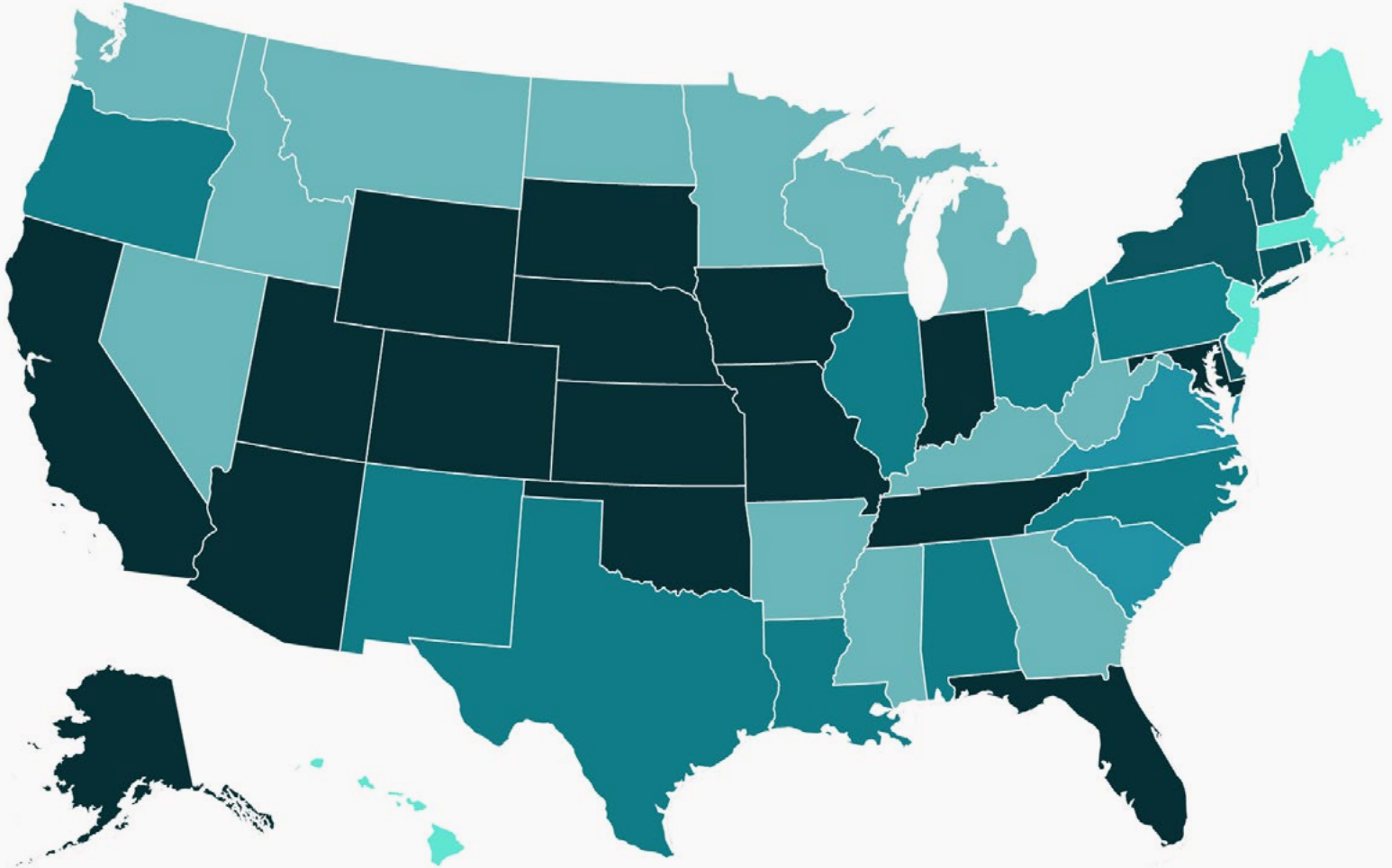
In June 2022, AFJ launched the [State Court Justice Project](#), an interactive hub detailing the selection method, justice information, and partisan balance of the highest court in all 50 states. The hub also highlights states with in-depth information on each justice, notable cases from each court, and how to weigh in on specific state supreme court vacancies. The hub is continually growing, with the goal of equipping communities and activists in every state with the knowledge to understand and impact their state courts.

In 2022, AFJ Action Campaign identified Michigan, North Carolina, and Ohio as three states to watch, with partisan control of the states' highest courts on the ballot in the midterm election cycle. These courts routinely adjudicate cases affecting issues including LGBTQ+ rights, redistricting, voting rights, and abortion access. Working with stakeholders on the ground in each state, AFJ Action Campaign launched campaigns to educate voters and support progressive candidates with demonstrated commitments to justice for all. In Michigan, Democrats retained their 4-3 majority on the court, while in North Carolina and Ohio, Republicans secured a majority on both courts.

These elections represent only a portion of the dozens of recent and upcoming state supreme court races and appointments throughout the country. While high court selection processes can vary significantly from state to state, people in every single state can exercise influence over the judges who are ultimately selected. As state courts shape the landscape of fundamental rights throughout the country, it is essential that these courts reflect and defend the communities they serve.

# III.

## THE STATE COURT LANDSCAPE IN 2022



### Selection Method

- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  Non-partisan election                       |  Partisan election    |
|  Governor selection                          |  Merit selection      |
|  Governor selection, then retention election |  Legislative election |

In 2022, 30 states held elections for a seat on their state supreme court. Of those states, 18 held partisan or non-partisan elections, and 14 held retention elections.<sup>3</sup>

In partisan elections, judicial candidates are listed on the ballot with a political affiliation and are chosen through public elections. Under this model, candidate identifications on the ballot may include, for example, Democrat, Republican, Independent, Green Party, or Libertarian.

In non-partisan elections, judicial candidates are not formally affiliated with a political party on the ballot and are chosen through public elections. In some states, such as Michigan, there are partisan primaries or partisan nominating conventions to select the judicial candidates to represent the Democratic and Republican parties on the general election ballots.

Retention elections are uncontested elections held when a judge's term is about to expire. The judge is put on the ballot with a "yes" or "no" vote to keep their position. A judge up for retention election must meet a certain threshold of "yes" votes to remain in their seat. These thresholds vary by state but are often 50 to 60 percent. If a judge loses a retention election, then a replacement judge will be chosen using the state's interim appointment method.

Merit selection is also referred to as the "Missouri Plan" or assisted appointment. There are two stages in merit selection. First, a "Nominating Commission" screens applications and interviews prospective candidates. Members of these commissions may be elected by bar associations, governors, legislatures, other elected officials, or private citizens. Second, the Commission recommends a slate of preferred candidates, typically three to five, to the appointing body. The appointing body is usually the governor. After appointment of the individual, they are retained on the bench for subsequent terms by retention elections or review and renomination by the commission, governor, or legislature.

Gubernatorial appointment, also referred to as governor selection or appointment, is a process by which a state's governor nominates individuals to the bench, and sometimes involves some form of confirmation to the bench by another body. This selection method is different than merit

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3: Illinois and New Mexico held both partisan and retention elections in 2022.

Gubernatorial appointment, also referred to as governor selection or appointment, is a process by which a state's governor nominates individuals to the bench, and sometimes involves some form of confirmation to the bench by another body. This selection method is different than merit selection because the governor does not have to choose candidates from a recommended slate, though in some states like Maine the governor chooses to partner with a commission to identify and recommend candidates to the confirming body. Once the governor selects their nominee, a legislative or other government body will vote to confirm the nominee.

*Note that the partisan affiliations detailed below are chosen from a variety of factors depending on the process a particular state uses. Party identification is determined in partisan elections by the affiliation publicly listed on the ballot. For some non-partisan election states, partisanship is assigned based on the party nominating the candidates, endorsements, or partisan primary processes. In some merit selection and governor selection states, the party affiliation may be indicated on public materials such as a judgeship application or public registration with a political party. For other merit and governor selection states, party identification indicates the appointing governor's party. In some cases of unclear partisan affiliation, NP is used as a temporary identifier.*

Across many states, voters maintained the status quo in 2022—most judicial incumbents were reelected to their seats in both retention and partisan/non-partisan elections. However, there were a handful of changes to the balance of some state supreme courts that will have significant consequences for critical constitutional rights.



# III. A

## STATE SUPREME COURT ELECTIONS IN 2022

### Partisan Elections

#### 1. ALABAMA



**Kelli Wise  
(R-Incumbent)**  
Won, No Challenger



**Open Seat:  
Greg Cook (R)**  
Defeated Debra Jones (D)

#### 2. ILLINOIS (also had a retention election)



**Mary O'Brien (D)**  
Defeated Michael Burke  
(R-Incumbent)



**Open Seat:  
Elizabeth Rochford (D)**  
Defeated Mark Curran (R)

#### 3. LOUISIANA



**John Weimer  
(D-Incumbent)**  
Won, No Challenger

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## 4. NORTH CAROLINA

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**Trey Allen (R)**  
Sam Ervin (D-Incumbent)



**Richard Deitz (R)**  
Open Seat: Lucy Inman (D)

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## 5. OHIO

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**Pat Fischer  
(R-Incumbent)**  
Defeated Terri Jamison



**Pat DeWine  
(R-Incumbent)**  
Defeated Marilyn Zayas (D)



**Open Seat for  
Chief Justice: Justice  
Sharon Kennedy (R)**  
Defeated Justice Jennifer Brunner  
(D). Gov. DeWine appointed her  
replacement, Justice Joseph Deters (R)

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## 6. TEXAS

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**Rebecca Huddle (R)**  
Defeated Amanda Reichel (D)



**Debra Lehrman (R)**  
Defeated Erin Nowell (D)

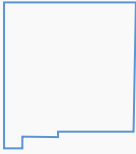


**Evan Young (R)**  
Defeated Julia Maldono (D)

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## 7. NEW MEXICO

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**Julie Vargas  
(D-Incumbent)**

Defeated Thomas Montoya (R)



**Briana Zamora  
(D-Incumbent)**

Defeated Kerry Morris (R)



**Michael Vigil  
(D-Incumbent)**

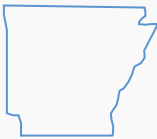
Retained

## Non-Partisan Elections

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### 1. ARKANSAS

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**Robyn Wynn  
(R-Incumbent)**

Defeated Chris Carnahan



**Karen Baker  
(D-Incumbent)**

Defeated Gunner Delay



**Rhonda Wood  
(R-Incumbent)**

Won Without Having To  
Appear On The Ballot

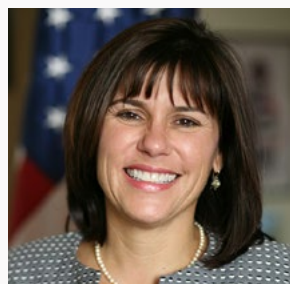
### 2. GEORGIA

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**Verda Colvin  
(NP-Incumbent)**

Defeated Veronica Brinson (D)



**Shawn Ellen Lagrue  
(R-Incumbent)**

Won, No Challenger



**Carla Mcmillian  
(R-Incumbent)**

Won, No Challenger

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### 3. IDAHO

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**Colleen Zahn  
(R-Incumbent)**

Won, No Challenger



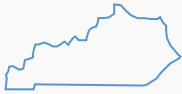
**Robyn Brody  
(R-Incumbent)**

Won, No Challenger

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### 4. KENTUCKY

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**Christopher Nickell  
(D-incumbent)**

Won, No Challenger



**Michelle Keller  
(D-incumbent)**

Defeated Joseph Fischer (R)



**Open Seat: Kelly  
Thompson (NP)**

Defeated Shawn Alcott (R)



**Open Seat: Angela  
McCormick Bisig (NP)**

Defeated Jason Bowman (R)

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## 5. MICHIGAN

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**Richard Bernstein  
(D-Incumbent)**

Won



**Brian Zahra  
(R-Incumbent)**

Won

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## 6. MINNESOTA

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**Gordon Moore  
(D-Incumbent)**

Won, No Challenger



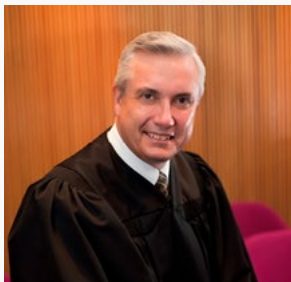
**Natie Hudson  
(D-Incumbent)**

Won, No Challenger

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## 7. MONTANA

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**James Rice  
(R-Incumbent)**

Defeated Bill D'alton (NP)



**Ingrid Gustafson  
(D-Incumbent)**

Defeated James Brown (R)

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## 8. NEVADA

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**Open Seat: Linda Bell (NP)**

Won, No Challenger



**Ron Parraguirre (R-Incumbent)**

Won, No Challenger

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## 9. NORTH DAKOTA

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**Daniel Crothers (R-Incumbent)**

Won, No Challenger

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## 10. OREGON

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**Roger Dehoog (D-Incumbent)**

Won, No Challenger

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## 11. WASHINGTON

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**Mary Yu (D-Incumbent)**

Won, No Challenger



**Barbara Madsen (D-Incumbent)**

Won, No Challenger



**G. Helen Whitener (D-Incumbent)**

Won, No Challenger

# Retention Elections

## 1. ARIZONA



**James Beene (R)**  
Retained



**Bill Montgomery (R)**  
Retained



**Ann Timmer (R)**  
Retained

## 2. CALIFORNIA



**Joshua Groban (D)**  
Retained



**Patricia Guerrero (D)**  
Retained



**Martin J. Jenkins (D)**  
Retained



**Goodwin Liu (D)**  
Retained

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### 3. FLORIDA

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**Jamie Rutland  
Grosshans (R)**  
Retained



**John D. Couriel (R)**  
Retained



**Ricky Polston (R)**  
Retained



**Charles Canady (R)**  
Retained



**Jorge Labarga (R)**  
Retained

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### 4. IOWA

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**Matthew McDermott (R)**  
Retained



**Dana Oxley (R)**  
Retained

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### 5. ILLINOIS (also had partisan elections)

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**Mary Jane Theis (D)**  
Retained



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## 6. KANSAS

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**Daniel Biles (D)**  
Retained



**Marla Luckert (R)**  
Retained



**Evelyn Z. Wilson (D)**  
Retained



**Caleb Stegall (R)**  
Retained



**Keynen Wall (D)**  
Retained



**Melissa Standridge (D)**  
Retained

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## 7. MARYLAND

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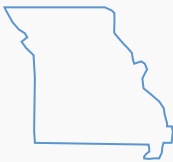


**Steven Gould (R)**  
Retained

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## 8. MISSOURI

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**Robin Ransom (R)**  
Retained



**Zel Fischer (R)**  
Retained

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## 9. NEBRASKA

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**Jonathan Papik (R)**  
Retained



**William Cassel (R)**  
Retained



**John Freudenberg (R)**  
Retained



**Michael Heavican (R)**  
Retained

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## 10. NEW MEXICO (also had partisan elections)

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**Julie Vargas  
(D-Incumbent)**  
Defeated Thomas Montoya (R)



**Briana Zamora  
(D-Incumbent)**  
Defeated Kerry Morris (R)

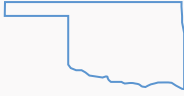


**Michael Vigil  
(D-Incumbent)**  
Retained

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## 11. OKLAHOMA

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**James R. Winchester (R)**  
Retained



**Douglas L. Combs (D)**  
Retained



**Dustin Rowe – (R)**  
Retained



**Dana Kuehn (R)**  
Retained

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## 12. SOUTH DAKOTA

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**Michael Mark Salter (R)**  
Retained



**Patricia Devaney (R)**  
Retained

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## 13. TENNESSEE

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**Jeff Bivins (R)**  
Retained



**Sarah Campbell (R)**  
Retained



**Sharon Lee (D)**  
Retained



**Holly Kirby (R)**  
Retained

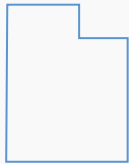


**Roger A. Page (R)**  
Retained

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## 14. UTAH

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**Paige Petersen (R)**  
Retained

# III. B

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## NOTABLE STATE SUPREME COURT ELECTIONS IN 2022

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### ILLINOIS:

In 2021, the Democrat-controlled Illinois State Legislature redrew the state's judicial district boundaries for the first time since 1964. The redistricting followed state supreme court Justice Thomas Kilbride (D) losing his retention election in 2020. Following an influx of Republican funding to oppose him, he became the first supreme court justice to lose a retention election in Illinois. In 2022, the seven-seat Illinois supreme court held two partisan elections: one for a vacant Second District supreme court seat, and a second in which incumbent Justice Michael J. Burke (R) ran for reelection. There was also a retention election held for Chief Justice Mary Jane Theis (D). The candidates' positions on *Dobbs* and abortion access played an important role in these races, and both Democratic and Republican candidates received millions in campaign donations. Challenger Elizabeth M. Rockford (D) defeated Mark Curran (R) for the vacant Second District seat by 55.2% to 44.8%. Mary O'Brien (D) defeated incumbent Justice Burke (R) by 50.8% to 49.2%. Chief Justice Theis (D) also won her retention election. As result, Democrats entered the election holding a narrow 4-3 majority on the state supreme court and emerged with a 5-2 supermajority.

### KANSAS:

Supreme court justices in Kansas are appointed by the governor, assisted by a commission overwhelmingly selected by the state Bar Association. Justices who are appointed mid-term must run for retention election in the next even-numbered year, and every six years after that. Kansas is the only state that uses this exact selection method. The seven-seat Kansas Supreme Court has been notable for its role in upholding reproductive rights for Kansans, though it has taken a more restrictive approach to issues of redistricting and voting.<sup>4</sup> In 2019, the Kansas Supreme Court held in *Hodes & Nauser v. Schmidt* that the Kansas constitution protects the right to an abortion. Following the voters' rejection in August 2022 of a proposed amendment to abrogate the right to an abortion, anti-abortion groups conducted a sustained campaign to target Democratic justices in the November 2022 retention elections. Entering the 2022 election, Democrats held a 5-2 majority on the court, and the terms of six out of the seven supreme court justices were up for reelection. All six justices retained their seats with wide margins ranging between 31 and 46 points.

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<sup>4</sup>: In *Rivera v. Schwab*, 512 P.3d 168 (Kan. 2022) the court held that partisan gerrymandering is a nonjusticiable political question. The court would also note that partisanship in district line drawing is permissible under Kansas law.

## **KENTUCKY:**

Four justices on the seven-seat majority-Republican Kentucky Supreme Court stood for election in 2022: Justice Michelle Keller (D), Justice Angela McCormick Bisig (NP), Justice Kelly Thompson (D), and Justice Christopher Shea Nickell (D). Keller won with 54.8% of the vote. McCormick Bisig won with 80.3% of the vote. Thompson gained 642.5% of the vote. Nickell ran unopposed. Justice Keller, who has been scored by various organizations as a ‘mild Democrat’ prevailed in a contested race over Joseph Fischer, a Republican member of the Kentucky House of Representatives and an ardent opponent of abortion. Fischer had been one of the key legislators behind Kentucky’s 2019 ‘trigger law’—which banned abortion with a limited exception to save the life of the prospective mother—that went into effect following *Dobbs*. Fischer had also been a sponsor of a proposed amendment to Kentucky’s Constitution—which was rejected by voters in the 2022 election—that would have made explicit that Kentucky’s constitution does not protect the right to an abortion. Fischer was endorsed by anti-abortion groups and the Republican State Leadership Committee spent \$375,000 on pro-Fischer ads. In the upcoming term the Kentucky Supreme Court is likely to issue key decisions regarding abortion and partisan gerrymandering.

## **MICHIGAN:**

The Michigan Supreme Court has been particularly active in deciding cases involving reproductive rights, election law, and substantive rights. In 2022, the court issued key decisions protecting LGBTQ+ rights. Although the court’s elections are formally non-partisan, candidates are put forth by the political parties. Heading into the election, Democratic justices held a 4-3 majority on the court. The 2022 race featured five candidates competing for two seats, with the two candidates receiving the most votes winning. The Democratic Party backed incumbent Justice Richard Bernstein and Rep. Kyra Bolden, whereas the Republican Party backed incumbent Justice Zahra and Paul Hudson. Challenger Kerry Lee Morgan was supported by the Libertarian Party. Democrats emerged from the election with their majority intact: incumbents Justice Bernstein (D) and Justice Zahra (R) both won reelection, with Bernstein winning 33.9% and Zahra 23.9%. Rep. Bolden (D) narrowly missed out on winning a seat on the bench as she received 21.9% of the vote. She was ultimately appointed to fill a vacancy in the court, as detailed below in section III(C), becoming the first Black woman to join the court.

**MONTANA:**

Two seats on the Montana Supreme Court were up for non-partisan election in the 2022 midterm election. Incumbent Democratic Justice Ingrid Gustafson and Republican Justice James Rice successfully defended their seats. Montana Republicans had targeted the races for two Supreme Court seats, which could determine access to abortion in Montana. In 1999, the Montana Supreme Court ruled that the state's constitutional right to privacy protected access to abortion. Gustafson, first appointed to the court in 2017 by Democratic Gov. Steve Bullock, defeated Montana Public Service Commissioner James Brown 54.3% to 45.7%. Outside groups affiliated with the Democratic Party raised money for Gustafson and encouraged voters to elect her to support legal access to abortion. Brown was endorsed by Republican Gov. Greg Gianforte, Republican Attorney General Austin Knudsen, and Republican U.S. Sen. Steve Daines. Rice defeated attorney Bill D'Alton 77.7% to 22.3%. Rice was first appointed to the court in 2001 by Republican Gov. Judy Martz, and was part of a five-justice panel that ruled unanimously in August 2022 to block abortion restrictions while a case between Planned Parenthood of Montana and the state proceeded. Despite a previous career as a Republican legislator, voters did not punish Justice Rice for his decision to block laws banning access to abortion. Incumbent Justice Gustafson also handily won reelection by playing up her record of protecting abortion access. Despite efforts by Republicans to restrict abortion access in the state, voters appear to have responded favorably to Supreme Court justices with a record of protecting access to abortion.

**NORTH CAROLINA:**

The results of the 2022 midterm elections caused the North Carolina Supreme Court to flip from a 4-3 Democratic majority to a 5-2 Republican majority beginning in 2023. Many viewed the North Carolina Supreme Court as a prime pickup opportunity for Republicans in the 2022 election cycle. Incumbent Richard Dietz (R) defeated challenger Lucy N. Inman (D) 52.6% to 47.4%, and challenger Trey Allen (R) defeated incumbent Justice Sam Ervin IV (D) 52.4% to 47.6%. Turnout was lower than in 2018 among regular Democratic voters, including young voters, voters of color, and voters in metro areas. This contributed to Democratic losses up and down the ballot in North Carolina, and to Republicans winning large majorities in the state legislature. The loss of Justice Ervin's seat means that Democrats have lost four seats on the court since 2018, when they had a 6-1 majority on the court. Republicans continue to solidify their power at the state level in North Carolina, which continues to be a battleground over gerrymandered districts.

In two rulings issued shortly before control flipped to Republicans, the North Carolina Supreme Court found that Republican lawmakers had acted unconstitutionally to weaken the power of traditionally Democratic strongholds in the state by passing a voter ID law that discriminated against Black voters and by drawing gerrymandered maps that weakened the influence of Democratic voters. In an unprecedented move, the newly comprised 5-2 Republican majority on the court decided in February 2023 to rehear these recently decided cases, suggesting its inclination toward overturning them.

### **OHIO:**

The 2022 elections for the Ohio Supreme Court saw three seats up for contention, with Republicans winning all three contests. Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor (R) retired at the end of the year due to reaching the mandatory retirement age under the Ohio State Constitution, thus her Chief Justice seat was up for election. As Chief Justice, O'Connor had sided with the court's three Democratic justices in many high-profile cases, including a series of cases rejecting gerrymandered Congressional and Ohio state legislative districts drawn by the Republican controlled Ohio legislature.<sup>5</sup> Justice Sharon Kennedy (R) defeated Justice Jennifer Brunner (D) in the election for Chief Justice by a margin of 56.3% to 43.7%. Incumbents Justice DeWine (R) and Justice Fischer (R) both won reelection over their Democratic challengers, Judge Marilyn Zayas (D) and Judge Terri Jamison (D), respectively. Fischer won 57.2% of the vote. DeWine received 56.6% of the vote. Gov. Mike DeWine (R) subsequently appointed Hamilton County Prosecuting Attorney Joseph T. Deters to fill the associate justice position vacated by now Chief Justice Kennedy. This election was heavily contested and featured record spending, with reproductive rights and criminal justice being central issues in the campaign. Justice Kennedy (R) would spend \$1.8 million on her campaign for Chief Justice, while Justice Brunner (D), her opponent, would spend \$630,000. The Republican State Leadership Committee would spend over \$2 million in television advertising accusing the three Democratic candidates of being "soft on crime". Among upcoming significant cases, the court is expected to eventually hear a challenge to the constitutionality of Ohio's "Heartbeat Bill" which bans abortions, except for cases involving a significant threat to the prospective mother's health, once a fetal heartbeat is detected.

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5: See *League of Women Voters of Ohio v. Ohio Redistricting Comm'n.*, 192 N.E.3d 379, 384 (Ohio 2022); *Adams v. DeWine*, 195 N.E.3d 74 (Ohio 2022); *Neiman v. LaRose*, 2022 WL 2812895 (Ohio 2022).



# III. C

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## NOTABLE SUPREME COURT APPOINTMENTS

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### **MICHIGAN:**

Michigan Supreme Court Chief Justice Bridget Mary McCormack (D) announced in September 2022 that she would retire from the Michigan Supreme Court two years into her second eight-year term, giving Gov. Gretchen Whitmer (D) her first opportunity to appoint a justice to the court. In Michigan, justices are appointed to fill vacancies directly by the governor without the use of a nominating commission or legislative confirmation. Many advocates, stakeholders, and activists privately called on Gov. Whitmer to appoint Rep. Kyra Harris Bolden (D) to fill Justice McCormack's seat if Bolden was unsuccessful in ousting Justice Zahra (R) in the November election. As detailed above, Justice Bernstein (D) and Justice Zahra (R) ultimately won re-election, with Bolden finishing in third with two other candidates trailing her. In November 2022, Gov. Whitmer announced her intention to appoint Bolden, and she assumed office on January 1, 2023. Her current term expires on January 1, 2025, requiring her to run in a special election in November 2024 to complete the remainder of Justice McCormack's eight-year term expiring on January 1, 2029. This appointment was historic—Justice Bolden, who worked as a criminal defense attorney, judicial clerk, and civil litigator before being elected to the Michigan House of Representatives, became the first Black woman to join the Michigan Supreme Court.

### **NEVADA:**

Attorney Patricia Lee was appointed to serve as a justice of the Nevada Supreme Court Seat F by then-Governor Steve Sisolak (D) in November 2022 to fill the seat left by the resignation of Justice Abbi Silver (R) in September 2022. In the event of a midterm vacancy, the Nevada Commission on Judicial Selection is tasked with recruiting and screening candidates and selecting three finalists to forward to the governor. The governor appoints one of the three finalists to fill the vacancy until the next general election. Lee became one of six applicants to apply for the vacancy on the Nevada Supreme Court in October 2022. The Commission on Judicial Selection convened on November 10, 2022 to interview the applicants, and forwarded Lee along with Washoe District Court Judge Scott Freeman and Clark County District Court Judge Tierra Jones as its three finalists for the appointment. Justice Lee's appointment was historic on multiple fronts—she is the first Black woman and the first Asian American to serve on the Nevada Supreme Court. She was Gov. Sisolak's only appointment to the court during his time as governor.

**NEW JERSEY:**

New Jersey selects its supreme court justices via gubernatorial appointment and senate confirmation. In 2021, Gov. Phil Murphy nominated Rachel Wainer Apter to fill a vacancy on the New Jersey Supreme Court. However, her nomination remained untouched for over year due to the practice of senatorial courtesy in the New Jersey Senate, according to which the senators of the nominee's home district must approve of the nominee before they can proceed. Her nomination was stalled by Republican Sen. Holly Schepisi. Wainer Apter was exceptionally qualified for the court, having led the New Jersey Division of Civil Rights, worked as a litigator at the ACLU of New Jersey, and clerked for Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. While Wainer Apter's nomination stalled, two more vacancies arose, leaving the court with only four out of seven justices. After nearly a year and a half of delay, Gov. Murphy was able to strike a deal with Sen. Schepisi, agreeing to appoint conservative Judge Douglas Fasciale to a permanent seat on the Supreme Court alongside Wainer Apter. Wainer Apter and Fasciale were both confirmed by the New Jersey Senate and joined the court in October 2022. One opening remains on the court due to the retirement of Justice Barry Albin in July 2022. Chief Justice Stuart Rabner appointed Jack M. Sabatino to fill the seat on a temporary basis beginning in September 2022, and Gov. Murphy has yet to nominate a candidate to fill the vacancy.

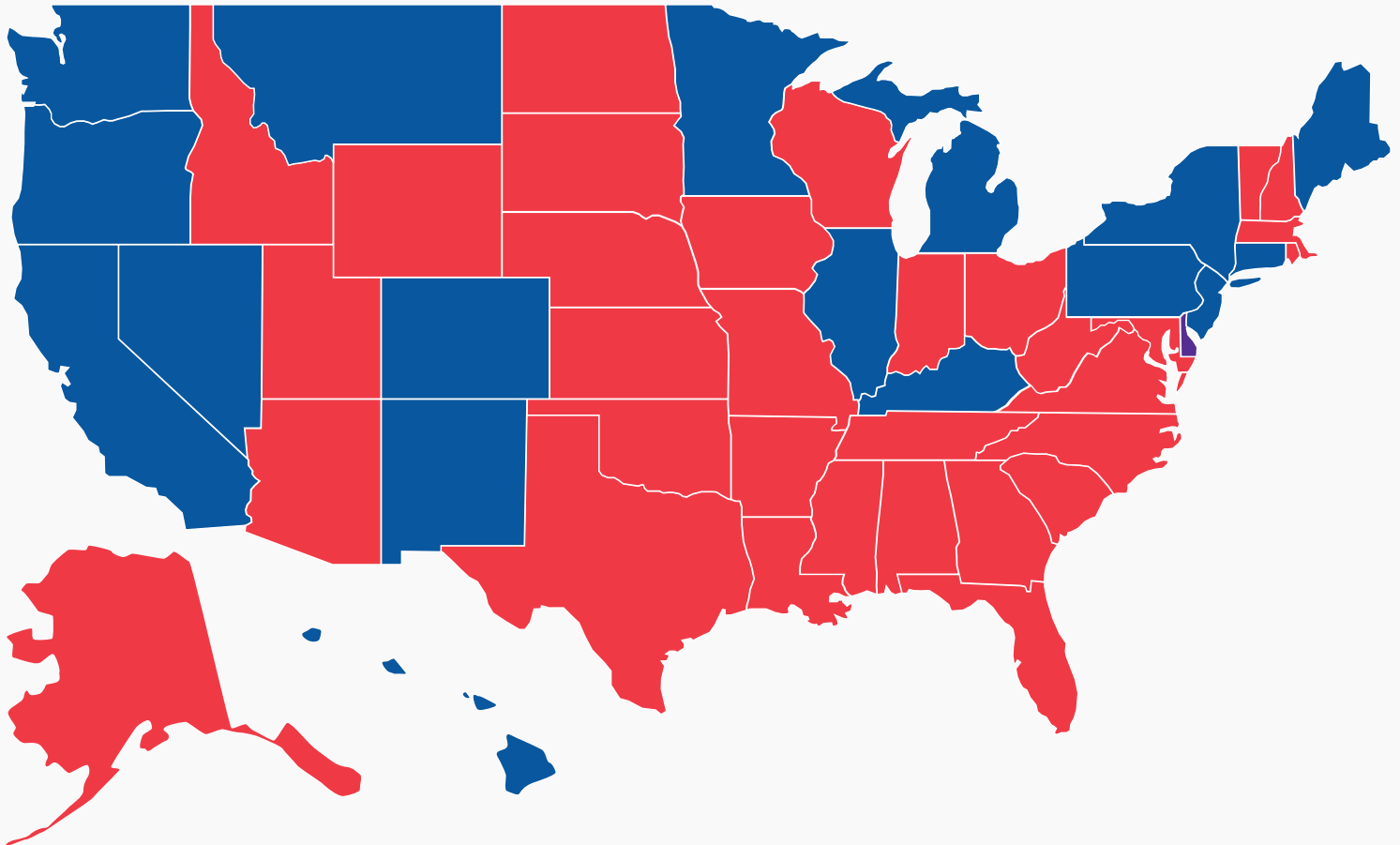
**NEW YORK:**

New York Governor Kathy Hochul announced her intention to appoint Hector D. LaSalle, a justice of New York's Supreme Court, Appellate Division, Second Department (New York's intermediate appellate court), to serve as Chief Judge of the New York Court of Appeals, the state's highest court. Hochul's decision to nominate LaSalle drew wide opposition and criticism from organizations and stakeholders representing a variety of interests and constituencies, including numerous unions and trade organizations, criminal justice advocates, elected officials, and local party leaders. These organizations and leaders raised concerns about LaSalle's past decisions on issues concerning abortion, criminal justice, corporate interests, and environmental issues, and cautioned that his appointment would continue the Court of Appeals' rightward trend in recent years. They called on Hochul to honor promises she made on the campaign trail during her re-election campaign in 2022 to appoint a more progressive chief judge. After a five-hour hearing in January 2023, the Senate Judiciary Committee voted to reject LaSalle's nomination and asserted that the state constitution allowed it to end LaSalle's nomination with this vote. Governor Hochul's administration interpreted the constitution differently, arguing that the Judiciary Committee had only voted not to recommend LaSalle to the full Senate, but that he was still entitled to a vote by the full Senate under the constitution. Her administration then threatened to sue the Senate to force a full vote on the nomination, but Senate Republicans ultimately filed the lawsuit. In the meantime, on February 15, 2023, the New York Senate announced it would hold a vote on LaSalle's nomination, and voted 39-20 to reject the nomination. Governor Hochul acknowledged the rejection of LaSalle and announced her intention to nominate a new candidate, accepting applications for a two-and-a-half-week window closing in early March 2023. On March 24, 2023, New York's Commission on Judicial Nomination released a new shortlist of candidates for Hochul to select a replacement nominee from.

# IV.

## STATE SUPREME COURTS IN 2023 AND BEYOND

### Partisan Control of State Supreme Courts



### 2023 ELECTIONS

While 2023 may be considered an off year for elections, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania have elections for their state supreme courts this year. Even though Wisconsin elects their judges by non-partisan election, the state’s April supreme court election will determine the “partisan” control of the court, and whichever party wins this election will control the court until 2025. Later this year, Pennsylvania will elect their next supreme court justice in November via partisan election. Pennsylvania’s election won’t affect which party controls the court.

**WISCONSIN:**

In Wisconsin, Justice Patience Roggensack, a conservative on the bench, is not running for re-election, leaving an open contest to replace her. Four candidates ran in the primary election held on February 21, 2023: conservative candidates former Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice Dan Kelly and Waukesha County Circuit Court Judge Jennifer Dorow (who recently came to public attention after presiding over the Waukesha Christmas parade attacker trial) and liberal candidates Dane County Circuit Judge Everett Mitchell and Milwaukee County Circuit Judge Janet Protasiewicz. Judge Protasiewicz (D) and Justice Kelly (R) emerged as the two winners of the primary election, and will compete against one another in the general election on April 4, 2023.

**Upcoming Wisconsin Election Dates:**

<b>DATE:</b>	<b>EVENT:</b>
3-31-23	Last day to register at municipal clerk's office. Voters have until 5:00pm
4-02-23	Last day to request an absentee ballot in person
4-04-23	Spring election

## **PENNSYLVANIA:**

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court is currently controlled by a Democratic majority (4-2, with a current vacancy). Candidates are running to replace Chief Justice Max Baer, who passed away in 2022. Due to the unexpected vacancy, Governor Josh Shapiro may appoint an interim replacement. The interim justice, however, would still have to stand for election with other candidates in the fall if they want to continue their service on the bench. Under Pennsylvania's judicial selection method, justices are elected by partisan election for their first term, and for subsequent terms are reelected via uncontested retention elections. The current candidates are Judge Carolyn Carluccio (R), Judge Patricia McCollough (R), Judge Daniel McCaffery (D), and Judge Deborah Kunselman (D). McCaffrey has gained the Democratic Party's endorsement, and Carluccio has been endorsed by the Republican Party.

Pennsylvania's election comes after consistent years of partisan attacks on the court. In recent years, Republican legislators have attempted to subvert the independence of the court due to decisions blocking partisan gerrymandering, the illegitimate 2020 election voter fraud cases, lawsuits against former Gov. Wolf's COVID-19 orders, and more. In 2018, in response to the Court's Democratic majority striking down partisan gerrymandered maps, Republican legislators publicly supported the impeachment of the justices that voted to nullify the maps.

In Pennsylvania, if a constitutional amendment is passed in the state legislature for two consecutive years, it may then be brought to the full state electorate for a ratification vote. During the 2019-2020 legislative session, Republican legislators introduced a bill that would bring a constitutional amendment giving the state legislature the power to draw judicial districts for the supreme court and appellate courts. Under this amendment, candidates would then run and be elected in those districts rather than statewide elections. Conservatives rushed to pass this bill, refusing public hearings and eliminating time for debate even amongst other legislators.

This bill passed the Pennsylvania House in 2020. Then in the next legislative session, an identical bill was introduced, and if it had passed both the Pennsylvania House and Senate it would have gone before Pennsylvania voters as a ballot referendum. Due to a concerted effort by progressive grassroots activists and courts voters, advocates were able to prevent the bill from passing in the state legislature again and being brought to a public vote in the election, but Pennsylvania Republicans have made clear their interest in subverting the power of voters in the state, and their recognition of the state supreme court as a key check on those attempts.

## Upcoming Pennsylvania Election Dates:

DATE:	EVENT:
5-01-23	Last day to register before primary election
5-09-23	Last day to request an absentee or mail-in ballot
5-16-23	Primary Election Note: Absentee ballots must be received by the county board of elections by 8pm (see below for military/overseas)
5-17-23	First day to register after the primary election
10-23-23	Last day for the county board of elections to receive overseas or military absentee ballots
10-31-23	Last day to request an absentee and mail-in ballot
11-07-23	Election Day Note: Absentee and mail-in ballots must be received by the county board of elections (see below for military/overseas)
11-14-23	Last day for the county board of elections to receive overseas or military absentee ballots

# 2024 ELECTIONS AND VACANCIES

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In total, 32 states will hold supreme court elections in 2024. 6 states will hold partisan elections. 13 states will hold non-partisan elections. Up to 13 states will hold retention elections depending on the timing of the Missouri Supreme Court's upcoming vacancies with the retirements of Justices Draper and Breckenridge; depending on how quickly the commission and governor act, there may one to two seats up for retention in the state. In total, up to 76 seats of the justices listed below could be up for a vote. That number may change depending on the pace and speed of replacements for justices who will reach the mandatory retirement age in 2024. There are also additional states with upcoming elections and vacancies.

## Partisan Elections in 2024

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### 1. ALABAMA 9R - 0D

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**Tom Parker (R)**  
Must Retire



**Tommy Bryan (R)**



**Sarah Stewart (R)**



**William Sellers (R)**



**Jay Mitchell (R)**



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## 2. ILLINOIS 5D-2R

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Joy Cunningham (D)



Lisa Holder White (R)

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## 3. LOUISIANA 5R-2D

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Scott Crichton (R)  
Must Retire, Will Hold a  
Special Election

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## 4. NORTH CAROLINA 5R-2D

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Michael Morgan (D)

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**5. OHIO 4R-3D**

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**Michael Donnelly (D)**



**Melody Stewart (D)**

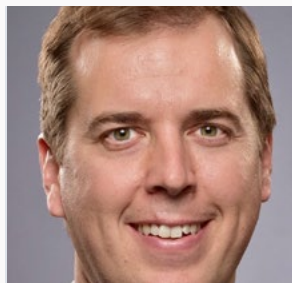
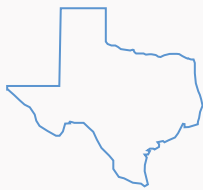


**Joe Deters (R)**

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**6. TEXAS 9R-0D**

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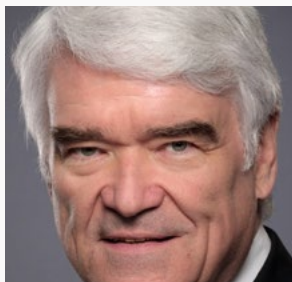
**Jimmy Blacklock (R)**



**John Devine (R)**



**Jane Bland (R)**



**Nathan Hecht  
(R-Chief Justice)**

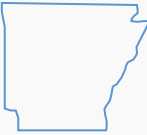
Must Retire, Gov. will appoint a replacement. Please note, depending on timing this replacement may not stand for election in 2024 and may have to wait until the next general election

# Non-Partisan Elections in 2024

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## 1. ARKANSAS 5R-2D

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**John Dan Kemp (R)**  
Must Retire



**Shawn Womack (R)**

## 2. GEORGIA 7R-1D-1NP

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**Michael Boggs (D)**



**Andrew Pinson (R)**



**Nels S.D. Peterson (R)**



**John Ellington (NP)**

## 3. IDAHO 5R-0D

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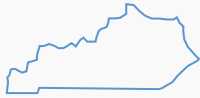


**G. Richard Bevan (R)**

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**4. KENTUCKY 5R-2D**

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Laurance VanMeter (R)

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**5. MICHIGAN 4D-3R**

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David Viviano (R)



Kyra Harris Bolden (D)

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**6. MINNESOTA 4D-3R**

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Margaret Chutich (D)



Barry Anderson (R)  
Must Retire



Anne McKeig (R)



Lorie Gildea (R)

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**7. MISSISSIPPI** 7R-2D

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Robert Chamberlin (R)



Jim Kitchens (D)



Dawn Beam (R)

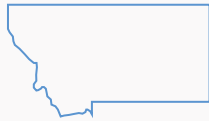


Jimmy Maxwell (R)

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**8. MONTANA** 5D-2R

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Dirk Sandefur (D)



Mike McGrath (D)

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**9. NEVADA** 4D-3R

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Lidia Stiglich (D)



Elissa Cadish (D)

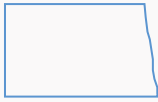


Patricia Lee (D)

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**10. NORTH DAKOTA 5R-0D**

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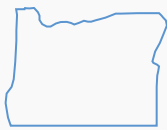


**Douglas Bahr (R)**

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**11. OREGON 7D-0R**

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**Meagan Flynn (D)**



**Rebecca Duncan (D)**



**Bronson James (D)**



Incoming replacement for Adrienne Nelson (D) – Nelson was confirmed to be a federal judge in February 2023. Gov. Kotek must appoint a replacement. That replacement will likely stand for election in November 2024, barring any extreme delays.

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**12. WASHINGTON 9D-0R**

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**Susan Owens (D)**  
Must Retire



**Steven Gonzalez (D)**



**Sheryl McCloud (D)**

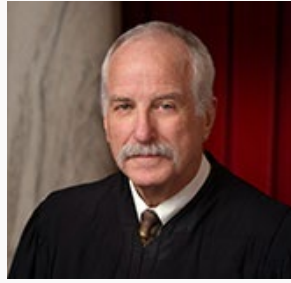
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**13. WEST VIRGINIA** *3R-1D-1NP*

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Haley Bunn (R)



John Hutchison (NP)

**Retention elections in 2024**

(Justices face a yes or no vote to remain on the bench)

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**1. ALASKA** *4R-1I*

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Jennifer Stuart  
Henderson (R)



Dario Borghesan (R)

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**2. ARIZONA** *7R-0D*

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Kathryn Hackett  
King (R)

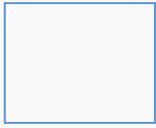


Clint Bolick (R)

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**3. COLORADO** 5D-2R

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Brian Boatright (R)



Monica Marquez (D)

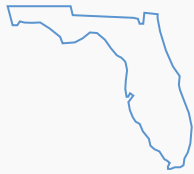


Maria Berkenkotter (D)

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**4. FLORIDA** 7R-0D

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Renatha Francis (R)

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**5. INDIANA** 5R-0D

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Loretta Rush (R)



Mark Massa (R)

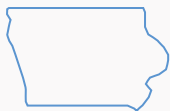


Derek Molter (R)

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**6. IOWA** 7R-0D

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David May (R)



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**7. MARYLAND 6R-1D**

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**David Fader (R)**



**Michele Hotten (R)**  
Must Retire

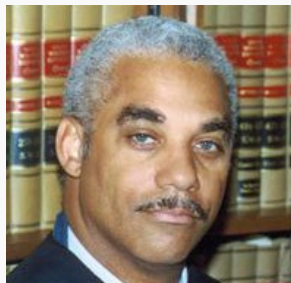


**Shirley Marie Watts (D)**

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**8. MISSOURI 4R-3D**

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**Justice Draper (D)**



**Breckenridge (R)**

Justices Draper (D) and Breckenridge (R) have announced their retirements in 2023 due to reaching the mandatory retirement age. If their replacements are confirmed before November 2023, then they will stand for retention election in 2024.

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**9. NEBRASKA 6R-1D**

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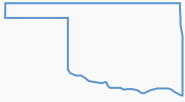


**Stephanie Stacy (R)**

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**10. OKLAHOMA 6R-3D**

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James Edmondson (D)



Yvonne Kauger (D)



Noma Gurich (R)

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**11. SOUTH DAKOTA 5R-0D**

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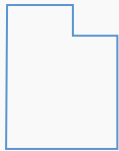


Scott Myren (R)

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**12. UTAH 5R-0D**

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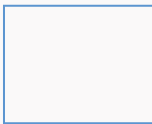


Matthew Durrant (R)

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**13. WYOMING 5R-0D**

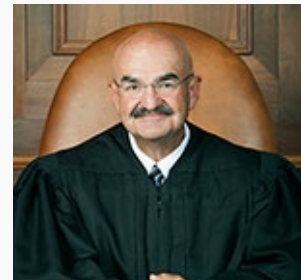
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John Fenn (R)



Kate Fox (R)



Keith Kautz (R)  
Must Retire

## Other Vacancies or Potential Changes to State Supreme Courts in 2024

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### MISSOURI

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Justices Draper and Breckenridge have announced their intent to retire in 2023 due to reaching the mandatory retirement age. Their replacements will be appointed by the governor from a slate of potential nominees from the judicial commission, and those replacements must stand for retention election in the next general election at least one year following their appointment. Depending on the governor and commission's timing, there will be one or two supreme court seats up for retention elections in 2024.

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### MARYLAND

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Justice Michele Hotten (R) will reach the mandatory retirement age. The governor will appoint her replacement.

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### NEW JERSEY

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Justice Lee Solomon (R) will reach the mandatory retirement age. The governor will appoint their replacement.

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### SOUTH CAROLINA

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Justice Donald Beatty will reach the mandatory retirement age in 2024. His replacement will be elected by the state legislature.

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### TEXAS

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Chief Justice Nathan Hecht (R) will reach the mandatory retirement age in 2024. The governor will appoint a replacement justice. Depending on timing, the replacement may or may not stand for election in 2024.

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### WYOMING

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Justice Keith Kautz will reach the mandatory retirement age. The governor will appoint his replacement.

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## NOTABLE RECENT STATE SUPREME COURT CASES

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High courts in every state regularly decide cases with significant implications for fundamental rights in areas including voting rights, healthcare, education, LGBTQ+ rights, and much more. Below are highlights of some recent notable state supreme court cases that demonstrate the breadth and depth of state supreme courts' impact, both in protecting and expanding rights and in restricting them. They represent only a sampling of the vast caseload that these courts collectively adjudicate, which in turn represent only a fraction of the millions of cases that make their way through the state trial and appellate courts.

### Healthcare and Abortion Access

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#### **KENTUCKY:**

*Cameron v. EMW Women's Surgical Center (2023)*: The Kentucky Supreme Court ruled that the state's almost complete ban on abortion would remain in place while an abortion lawsuit continues, despite the fact that Kentucky voters rejected a proposed constitutional amendment that would have allowed a permanent abortion ban only months prior.

#### **IOWA:**

*Planned Parenthood of the Heartland, Inc. v. Reynolds ex rel. State (2022)*: The Iowa Supreme Court addressed the validity of a 2020 state law mandating a 24-hour waiting period for all abortions. The court ultimately held that neither the equal protection nor the due process clauses of Iowa's Constitution protects abortion as a fundamental right. Following *Dobbs*, abortion is no longer recognized as a fundamental right under either the Iowa or federal constitutions.

#### **RHODE ISLAND:**

*Benson v. Mckee (2022)*: The Rhode Island Supreme Court ruled that the state legislature's Reproductive Privacy Act, which passed in 2019 and guaranteed the right to an abortion, was constitutional.

## Election Law and Voting Rights

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### **OHIO:**

*Adams v. DeWine* (2022): The Ohio State Supreme Court held that the US congressional districts redistricting plan adopted by the Ohio Redistricting Commission violated the prohibition on partisan gerrymandering in Congressional redistricting, as enshrined in Article XIX of the Ohio State Constitution. The Court found that the plan, which would ensure Republicans would reliably win 75 to 80% of the Congressional seats in Ohio was impermissibly motivated by and infused with partisan bias. The Court ordered the Commission to produce a plan that was compliant with Article XIX within 30 days, a deadline the Commission failed to comply with leading to further litigation over redistricting maps. In *Neiman v. LaRose* (2022), the Ohio Supreme Court also rejected the redrawn Republican-drawn map of U.S. House districts, finding it still constituted a partisan gerrymandering violation. Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor, who is no longer on the court, provided the pivotal swing vote in both of these cases.

### **NORTH CAROLINA:**

*Harper v. Hall* (2022): The North Carolina Supreme Court ruled that state Senate boundaries drawn by Republican legislators constituted partisan gerrymandering and must be redrawn. Following the November 2022 election, the newly constituted court has declared its intention to rehear this case in March 2023, despite it having just been decided, along with a 2018 decision by the court finding that Republican lawmakers passed a racially discriminatory voter ID law.

### **ALASKA:**

*Kohlhaas v. State of Alaska*, 2022 WL 12222442 (Alaska, 2022): The Alaska Supreme Court held that ranked-choice voting (in which voters rank multiple options on their ballot instead of a single choice) was permitted under the Alaska Constitution after being approved by voters in a 2020 ballot initiative.

### **WISCONSIN:**

*Teigen v. Wisconsin Elections Commission* (2022): The Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled that election drop boxes were illegal and that the Wisconsin Elections Commission erred in allowing this voting method without explicit authorization from the legislature.

### **PENNSYLVANIA:**

*McLinko v. Pennsylvania* (2022): The Pennsylvania Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of no-excuse mail-in voting, ruling that it was permitted under the Pennsylvania Constitution.

## Education

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### **NEVADA:**

*Shea v. State of Nevada* (2022): The Nevada Supreme Court dismissed a parent-initiated lawsuit that sought to reform the K-12 system, ruling that the Nevada Constitution did not grant the court authority to decide such political questions. In other words, the court held that the state legislature must make decisions about funding levels and how to improve the system.

### **NORTH CAROLINA:**

*Hoke County Bd. of Education v. State* (2022): The North Carolina Supreme Court reinstated a directive from the trial court that instructed state officials to transfer sufficient funding for a state remedial plan. According to the Court, it has a state constitutional obligation to ensure that schoolchildren have a “sound basic education.”

## Criminal Justice

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### **TENNESSEE:**

*State of Tennessee v. Booker* (2022): The Tennessee Supreme Court held that mandatory life sentences for juveniles are unconstitutional.

### **IDAHO:**

*State v. Clapp* (2022): The Idaho Supreme Court found that a trial court improperly allowed a nurse to testify telephonically in order to lay the foundation for the admission of a blood alcohol test, necessary evidence for a DUI conviction. The Court held allowing for the telephonic testimony violated the defendant’s right to confront adverse witnesses under the Confrontation Clause of the Sixth Amendment of the US Constitution. Given the necessary nature of the testimony the court held that this was not a harmless error and vacated the defendant’s conviction.

## LGBTQ+ Rights

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### **MICHIGAN:**

*Rouch World, LLC v. Dep't of C.R.* (2022): The Michigan Supreme Court held that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is prohibited by Michigan's Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act (ELCRA), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in public accommodations. For Michigan residents the ELCRA now provides broader protections on the basis of sexual orientation than Title VII as ELCRA does not just operate in the employment context but also prohibits discrimination in housing, public accommodations, public service, and educational facilities. Furthermore, ELCRA's application to employers does not depend upon the number of employees.

### **NEVADA:**

*In re Change of Name Salazar* (2022): The Court reversed a district court judgment, ruling that the lower court abused its discretion by denying an inmate's petition to change their name to one that conformed to their gender identity. The court found that the district court had no "substantial [or] principled reason" to deny the petition.

## Labor

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### **CALIFORNIA:**

*Naranjo v. Spectrum Sec. Services, Inc.* (2022): The California State Supreme Court held that premium pay for violating the California Labor Code's meal and rest break provisions are "wages" for purposes of reporting requirements and waiting time penalties. Thus, if employers fail to make timely payments of the premium pay to employees or fail to report the premium pay as wages earned on employee wage statements, they are in violation of those provisions of the California Labor Code and are subject to penalty.

### **NEW JERSEY:**

*East Bay Drywall, LLC v. Department of Labor and Workforce Development* (2022): The New Jersey Supreme Court held that a company owed back taxes for failing to classify several of its workers as employees instead of contractors according to the "ABC test" in the state's Unemployed Compensation Law. The substance of the worker's job, their relationship with the employer, and the maintenance of records were key considerations in this decision.

## Gun Violence

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### **MAINE:**

*In re J.* (2022): The Maine Supreme Court rejected challenges to a Maine statutory scheme that allows judges to issue weapons restrictions orders following findings that a person is ‘mentally ill’ and poses a ‘likelihood of foreseeable harm’ in the foreseeable future. The court found that the statute was neither unconstitutionally vague nor did it infringe upon the “right to bear arms” as found within the Maine State Constitution.

### **KANSAS:**

*State v. Betts* (2022): In this case the defendant, a police officer, fired two gunshots at a dog, in an alleged act of self-defense. Bullet fragments struck a child who the defendant knew was sitting nearby. The defendant was charged with aggravated battery under Kansas law. The state district court dismissed the charges finding that the defendant was entitled to immunity under Kansas’ self-defense law. The Kansas Supreme Court held that immunity under Kansas’ self-defense statute does not extend to a defendant’s reckless acts while engaged in self-defense that result in unintended injury to an innocent bystander.

### **MISSOURI:**

*City of St. Louis v. State* (2022): In 2021 the Missouri General Assembly passed the Second Amendment Preservation Act (SAPA), which states in part that certain federal gun laws “shall be considered infringements on the people’s right to keep and bear arms” in Missouri. St. Louis sought declaratory relief—that SAPA violated the Missouri Constitution and the Supremacy Clause of the US Constitution—and an injunction against the enforcement of SAPA. The circuit court granted judgment to the State, finding that St. Louis had an adequate remedy at law—thus, declaratory and injunctive relief would be inappropriate. The Missouri Supreme Court would reverse, finding that St. Louis lacked an adequate remedy at law. The court declined to hear the merits and instead remanded the case back to the circuit court for adjudication on the merits. No further decision from the state court has been forthcoming. By declining to rule on the merits, or to issue a stay, the Missouri Supreme Court allows this flagrantly unconstitutional law to remain in effect. The constitutionality of SAPA is currently before federal courts following a lawsuit by the Biden Department of Justice.



# VI.

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## CONCLUSION

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There is much work to do in ensuring that our state courts truly reflect the communities they serve and uphold our most fundamental rights. With state supreme court elections this year in Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, dozens of state supreme court elections in 2024, important vacancies to be filled via appointments on state supreme courts throughout the country, and critical cases coming before each of these courts, it is more urgent than ever that people in every state know who sits on their courts and how they get there. AFJ Action Campaign will continue to educate the electorate on the importance of state courts and the need for exceptionally qualified demographically and professionally diverse state courts, and we will partner closely with communities and stakeholders throughout the country. The future of our democracy and our fundamental rights depends on it.

STATE COURT

**JUSTICE**

PROJECT

