

April 14, 2021

Durham People's Alliance
Political Action Committee
P.O. Box 2935
Durham, North Carolina 27715

Dear Political Action Committee:

I am writing this letter to request the endorsement of the Durham People's Alliance for appointment to the Durham County Superior Court Bench to fill the seat being vacated by The Honorable James E. Hardin. I have served the citizens of Durham as a District Court Judge for twelve (12) years, and I would be honored to serve Durham as a Superior Court Judge. I resided in North Carolina since 1993. I have been married to my wife Lisa for twenty-three (23) years, and we are the proud parents of two children educated in the Durham Public School System. My family and I attend St. Titus Episcopal Church. I am also a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity and Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity. My entire professional career has prepared me to be the most qualified candidate for this appointment to the Superior Court bench.

In 1996, I obtained my Juris Doctor from North Carolina Central University School of Law. After graduating from law school, I began my legal career as a contract attorney with the law firm of Womble, Carlyle, Sandridge and Rice, in Winston-Salem. At this firm, I conducted document review to identify responsive documents for a special project within the firm. After identifying responsive documents, I determined if any privileges existed that would cause the reviewed documents not to be subject to disclosure per any discovery request. In this position, I learned the importance of paying attention to detail and issue spotting, which are skills that I was able to utilize successfully in subsequent employment.

In 1997, I had the honor of being employed as an Assistant Public Defender in the Durham County Public Defender's Office. As an Assistant Public Defender, I represented indigent clients in juvenile delinquency, district court, and superior court. I obtained a wide range of trial experience in misdemeanors and serious felony offenses, including Rape and Armed Robbery. At the Public Defender's Office, I learned how to be a trial attorney, how to negotiate a good resolution for my clients, and more importantly, how to relate and interact with people from different walks of life and socio-economic circumstances. These skills are needed, and necessary as a judge to ensure that the administration of justice is specifically customized to the individual that appears before the judge for resolution of his/her case. I have utilized these skills as a District Court Judge, and if chosen, I will do so as a Superior Court Judge.

While employed at the Public Defender's Office, I was also employed as an Adjunct Professor at North Carolina Central University School of Law. As an Adjunct Professor, I was able to assist in molding the legal profession's next generation of trial lawyers. I, along with another Adjunct Professor (Dawn Baxton) prepared law students to compete in competitions against other law schools nationally. Law students learned how to conduct a complete trial, which included pretrial motions, opening statements, presentation of evidence, and closing arguments. The fact patterns provided by the competition coordinators ranged from complex civil matters, to high level criminal matters. This position provided me with the opportunity to constantly refresh my knowledge of both civil law and procedure, as well as criminal law and procedure.

In 2001, I started private practice with the firm of Simons, Fitzpatrick and Wilks. As a private attorney, I continued my representation of indigent citizens. I also extended my areas of practice to include criminal federal matters, real estate closing, civil proceeding, family law, and bankruptcy. In private practice, I was able to enhance my time

management skills, in order to effectively represent clients in multiple counties on the same day. Additionally, I travelled to multiple counties and learned the nuances of practicing and appearing in different courts throughout North Carolina. As a Superior Court Judge, I will be required to rotate to different counties. I am prepared and equipped to satisfy this requirement and will represent Durham County in a professional manner.

In 2003, I was employed as an Assistant Attorney General under the leadership of Attorney General Roy Cooper. As an Assistant Attorney General, I represented the North Carolina Department of Corrections in personnel matters, and drafted appellate briefs for felony criminal appeals. This position required me to travel to various correctional facilities in preparation for trial. I gained extensive experience presenting cases before the Office of Administrative Hearings. While at the Attorney General's Office, I attended the National Institute of Trial Advocacy Training at Harvard University. I also participate in the minority leadership program. The experiences I gained as an Assistant Attorney General were invaluable. I enhanced my civil practice knowledge base, and I was able to travel throughout the State to interact with and represent people from different areas in various court settings.

In 2007, I was recruited to returned to Durham County as an Assistant District Attorney to serve as the District Court Supervisor. In this role, I was responsible for overseeing all District Court operations for the office. During my tenure at the Durham County District Attorney's Office, I created policies and procedures for District Courts to ensure the efficient, and effective operation of criminal courts. I facilitated networking services in the courtrooms to allow my colleagues access to criminal records to ensure fair and equitable administration of justice. My primary duties were to supervise all district court attorneys, negotiate misdemeanors, screen appropriate felony matters to district court, and when necessary, conduct trials and probable cause hearings in the absence of the assigned felony prosecutor. In addition to my primary duties, I conducted training seminars for the newly hired Assistant District Attorneys, as well as law enforcement officers in Basic Law Enforcement Training. As an Assistant District Attorney, I develop leadership, delegation skills, and interpersonal skills.

In July of 2008, I was appointed to the Durham County District Court Bench by Governor Michael Easley. As a District Court Judge, I have presided in all District Courts, which includes criminal court, traffic court, civil court (jury trials involving amounts in dispute less than \$10,000), child support court, abuse, neglect and dependency court, family court, and juvenile delinquency court. I have also presided in our specialty Drug Treatment Court. I have had the opportunity to engage with citizens from every walk of life, ethnicity, race, religion or sexual orientation. This experience has enabled me to develop my judicial temperament and philosophy, where I attempt to be knowledgeable, mindful of time, patient with all parties, and most importantly, fair and impartial while administering justice with mercy. The skills I have gained on the District Court bench are directly transferrable to Superior Court.

In closing, I humbly ask for your endorsement for appointment to the Superior Court bench. Based on my professional experiences, I am uniquely qualified, and the perfect choice to represent Durham County as a Superior Court Judge. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Brian C. Wilks
District Court Judge