

Lazar campaign: Declines to run for Wisconsin state Supreme Court

Posted on Monday, Nov 26, 2018

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Endorses Court of Appeals Judge Brian Hagedorn

Today, Waukesha County Circuit Court Judge Maria S. Lazar announced her decision to pass on running for the State of Wisconsin's highest court. Lazar also made her endorsement of Court of Appeals Judge Brian Hagedorn public today. Judge Lazar released the following statement regarding the April 2019 Supreme Court election.

"Earlier this year, I expressed my interest in a possible run for State Supreme Court Justice in the 2019 election. I harbor deep concerns that our judiciary—at all levels—has been eroded, from its proper high position based upon our founders' respect for the law, constitutional fidelity, and a devotion to service, to the purely partisan battlefield that has insinuated itself into our public elections. This denigration of the judiciary—a respected and integral third branch of our government—has been so disturbing that I contemplated stepping forward to correct this downward spiral before irreparable harm was wrought upon the system. It is time for the judiciary to stand up and to declare it is, and should, be apart from such petty, political posturing. Judicial elections are not political, partisan events, and it is long past time for judicial candidates to stop the name-calling, to grow up, and to, quite frankly, act like the judicial officers we are and should be; judges are to be the servants of the law, not the other way around.

"As I deliberated about this election, though, I also looked to my family and where we stand and what we face in 2018-19. This summer, my focus was on my husband and children, and not on a judicial election. That made my decision not to run in 2019 much easier. For me, family, faith, and respect for the law are three preeminent driving forces that propel me forward. Simply put, this is not the year for me to seek a new judicial office.

“I am not ruling out a future run for the Wisconsin State Supreme Court. In the meantime, my service to Waukesha County and to my judicial ideals shall remain a driving force. I am still moving forward to improve the court system, to ensure that justice is afforded to all individuals regardless of position in society, to safeguard our Constitution and our constitutional rights as a circuit/trial court judge, as well as to provide a bulwark against the epidemic of opioids and other drugs through my work as Waukesha County’s Drug Treatment Court Judge.

“Finally, at present, there are two Court of Appeals judges who have announced their candidacy for the State Supreme Court. I am acquainted with both individuals. I have had an opportunity to meet with both candidates, as well as having observed their work, their work ethic, their judicial philosophies and their views for the future of Wisconsin’s judicial system. Both individuals are well respected amongst the judiciary and are thoughtful and deliberate jurists.

“A careful analysis of each candidate’s judicial philosophy, however, leads me to the inevitable conclusion that Judge Brian Hagedorn has a more compatible view and a similar respect for the rule of law and our Constitutions. I follow and admire the late United State Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia’s interpretations of what judges should—and more importantly—should not do, as well as how this significant, yet separate, branch of government was designed to interact with the other two branches. That being said, Judge Hagedorn’s stated positions more closely resemble my thoughts, practices and judicial viewpoint. Accordingly, I am honored to endorse Judge Brian Hagedorn for election to the State Supreme Court in 2019.”