

## CeaseFire Pennsylvania Candidate Questionnaire for 2015 Supreme Court Elections

CeaseFire Pennsylvania is the advocacy arm of CeaseFirePA, Pennsylvania's leading gun violence prevention organization. We seek to reduce gun violence, stop the flow of illegal guns into our streets, and keep guns out of the hands of those who should not have them. We proudly work with mayors, police chiefs, city council members, and other elected officials, along with more than 50,000 citizen activists in cities and towns across Pennsylvania. For more information about our mission and accomplishments, please visit [www.ceasefirepa.org](http://www.ceasefirepa.org).

**CeaseFire Pennsylvania wants to provide information to Pennsylvania voters about the candidates seeking to serve on the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.** To that end, we hope you will complete this questionnaire. In determining whether or not to recommend a particular candidate, CeaseFire Pennsylvania may also consider that candidate's record during past service as an elected official.

To be considered for recommendation by CeaseFire Pennsylvania, please complete the following questionnaire and return it no later than October 20, 2015. Responses may be faxed to (215) 923-3385, emailed to [ceasefire\\_pennsylvania@CeaseFirePA.org](mailto:ceasefire_pennsylvania@CeaseFirePA.org), or mailed to 1518 Walnut Street, Suite 502, Philadelphia, PA 19102.

Paul P. Panepinto.

October 20, 2015

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Candidate signature

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Date

Paul P. Panepinto.

Independent Judicial Alliance

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Candidate name (please print)

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Party

Justice of PA Supreme Court

judgepanepinto2015@gmail.com

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Office Sought

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Telephone/Email address

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### Instructions:

Please answer all 7 questions.

Feel free to leave additional comments in the space provided or on additional sheets.

When complete, please return to CeaseFire Pennsylvania using the address above.

**1. Why are you qualified to serve on the Pennsylvania Supreme Court?**

I spent 10 years in Family Court with 5 years of Administrative experience as the Administrative Judge of Family Court. 10 years in the Court Trial Division as a team leader in Motions Court, leader of Complex litigation and Mass Torts Program, and trial judge for numerous jury and non-jury trials. I also spent overall 5 years doing Criminal case trials for juvenile delinquency and adult criminal felony waiver trials where I now preside.

I have worked in Family Court to promote transparency and offer solutions to problems in the system—attacking truancy, promoting permanent placement for kids and uniting families.

In the Civil area I resolved thousands of cases, settling disputes and eliminating frivolous lawsuits.

For Criminal court I am tough on crime—commit the crime—do the time! —But I am fair and understanding when it comes to allowing defendants a chance to rehabilitate their lives from minor convictions.

**2. Please describe your judicial philosophy on whether regulation of firearms is consistent with the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article 1 Section 21 of the Pennsylvania Constitution. Please explain how *District of Columbia v. Heller*, 554 U.S. 570 (2008) and *McDonald v. Chicago*, 561 U.S. 742 (2010) affect your analysis.**

My judicial philosophy regarding the regulation of firearms is that I must follow the law. Like all legal rights, Second Amendment rights are not absolute. I recognize Pennsylvania's legitimate interest in regulatory interventions such as licensure requirements, prohibitions on firearms possession by felons and the mentally ill, and restrictions on carrying laws in certain places such as schools and government.

**3. Please describe your judicial philosophy regarding the separation of powers between the courts and the legislature, specifically as it applies to creation or amendment of courts' jurisdiction, causes of action, and remedies available in various causes of action.**

I believe in the separation of powers as put forth in the Constitution. As such, I do not believe judges should legislate from the bench. Judges should interpret the law as enacted by the legislative and executive branches. I believe in the supremacy of the Constitution and the protection of our fundamental rights. The court's role is to apply the law as it is written, subject to the rights and protections, which our constitutions reserve to each of us as citizens. Each judge is to thoroughly consider the facts of each case and then apply the law and constitutions to those facts.

It is the job of a judge to review matters of law and not to act as a "super legislature," by imposing "judge-made" law in place of democratically elected officials. The legislature is to make or write the law, the judiciary is purposed to interpret the law, and the executive branch is to enforce the law. Judges are not legislators and should not legislate from the bench. This philosophy allows establishes predictability in our judicial system.

4. **What have been the community, charitable, religion, educational, civic, professional or political organizations to which you have contributed, for which you have provided pro bono work, and/or of which you are a member?**

- Order of Sons of Italy in America-Roxborough Lodge
- Knights of Columbus- Cora Marie Council #4100
- Delco Family and Community Service Organization
- National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
- National Campaign to Stop Violence- PA Chair and Philadelphia Chair of Do The Write Thing Campaign
- Saint Thomas More Alumni Association Director

5. **Have you ever cast a public vote as a legislator or member of a political or other community organization relating to regulation of firearms? If so, please provide pertinent details.**

- No

6. **Have you ever been a part of any public controversy/incident in which regulation of firearms was or became an issue – either as an attorney, judge, party, witness, or supporter/opponent? If the controversy involved a lawsuit, state the name of its case, its resolution, and the nature of your participation. If the controversy did not result in a lawsuit, please provide the pertinent details.**

- No

7. **Please provide an up-to-date/current list of endorsements your campaign has solicited, has received and/or is using in promotional materials.**

I am running as an independent candidate and am not seeking the support of any political party and am not beholden to any outside groups, unions, or super-PAC's as I believe a Justice of Pennsylvania must be without outside influences. I do have a public endorsement from retired Superior Court Judge Cheryl Lynn Allen, who has known me for many years and was a colleague before her retirement.

Judge Paul P. Panepinto

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Candidate's Signature

October 20, 2015

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Date