

**South Dakota
Special Committee
on Judicial Election
Campaign
Intervention**

500 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501-5070



Committee Members:

Retired Chief Justice
Robert A. Miller (Chair)
Pierre, South Dakota
Retired Circuit Judge
Rodney Steele (Vice-Chair)
Brookings, South Dakota
Honorable Harvey Wollman
Frankfort, South Dakota
John Blackburn, Esq.
Yankton, South Dakota
Professor Christine Hutton
Vermillion, South Dakota
Arlene Ham-Burr
Rapid City, South Dakota
Dr. Robert Burns
Brookings, South Dakota
Bob H. Miller
Pierre, South Dakota
Robert C. Riter, Jr., Esq.
Pierre, South Dakota

General Legal Counsel:

Greg Sattizahn, Esq.
Pierre, South Dakota

Suzanne Kappes, Esq.
Pierre, South Dakota

October 1, 2014

Formal Opinion #14-07

Dear Candidates for Judicial Office:

Because of recent questions surrounding the applicable campaign contribution limits by organizations in judicial elections, the Special Committee on Judicial Election Campaign Intervention has determined it appropriate to issue the following advisory opinion concerning the campaign contribution limitations in a judicial election.

Canon 5(C)(2) provides that “[a] judicial candidate subject to public election shall direct his or her campaign committee to solicit and accept only such campaign contributions as are reasonable, in any event not to exceed one-thousand dollars (\$1000) in the election year per individual or organization.” This \$1,000 cap on campaign contributions during the election year specifically applies to contributions from both individuals and organizations.

This opinion is intended to provide guidance to judicial candidates; however, it is advisory in nature and should be regarded as such.

For the Committee,

Robert A. Miller, Retired Chief Justice
Committee Chair

The Committee is a non-partisan group dedicated to preserving the dignity and integrity of this state’s judicial system. We believe judicial candidates should aspire to the highest ethical standards to promote public trust and confidence in the fairness and impartiality of this state’s courts. We do not endorse candidates, and this opinion is not intended to announce support for, or opposition to, any candidate. Instead, we strive to educate the candidates, the media, and the public about judicial campaign conduct.