

Remarks
Judicial Appointment News Conference
April 27, 2007

I would like to thank the Governor and the members of the Judicial Selection Commission for providing me this opportunity to serve. You know, yesterday before I got the call from you, Governor, I had just finished making updates to my outline of questions and hopefully intelligent answers for the next go-round in the application process...I guess I won't be needing them now!

Although this is a position for which I applied and interviewed – a couple of times – I was momentarily uncertain of my response when you asked me if I would join the Hennepin County bench. Of course, I said yes. I am truly excited about the opportunity to join the bench.

But in that split second, the reality of the decision hit me. I will be leaving a position as an Assistant United States Attorney that I have truly loved. I have been able to work with some of the best, and nicest, professionals in the legal field. We have celebrated with one another in our successes, and we have consoled each other when cases did not go as we had hoped. But we always pursued justice. It is, and always will be, an awesome group of professionals. It will be a bittersweet moment when I leave the office.

Yet I have made similar transitions throughout my 19-year legal career – always leaving what I considered to be one of the best legal positions. I have practiced in military, state, and federal courts. I was in private practice for nine years with two great law firms – with most of that time here in Minnesota with Leonard, Street and Deinard. And in my roughly 10 years in the criminal justice field, I have served as both prosecutor and defense counsel. I hope I have the breadth and depth of experience to make an immediate contribution to the bench.

Throughout all of those career moves, I have been joined by my wonderful wife, Laurie. And for the last couple of moves, our two great kids – Jack and Kate – have been along for the ride. I'm a

lucky guy. And I'm glad they could all be here today – even though with the last-minute notice last night it required some interesting juggling of schedules on my wife's part. She has some patients waiting – patiently, I hope – for her to get to the operating room. And, Governor, Kate is – right now – missing her weekly spelling test...Kate, the word is "stupendous." And Jack is missing his special music appreciation class that I was supposed to teach starting at 8:55 this morning. So, already, this whole judge thing is causing changes to our routine. Still, I have always had their support.

I would also like to thank those friends and colleagues who have helped me throughout the years – and particularly those who could, again on quite short notice, juggle their own schedules to be here this morning. It means a lot to me.

Finally, to those who will appear in my courtroom – and to you, Governor – I pledge to be fair, quick and clear. And to not take myself too seriously, although I will always – of course – take my position seriously. To my future colleagues on the bench, I pledge to continue the great tradition of camaraderie that has always been a hallmark of the Minnesota bench.

Thank you.