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The Circuit Court of Tennessee
FOR THE
THIRTIETH JUDICIAL DISTRICT AT MEMPHIS
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YOLANDA R. KIGHT
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DONNA M. FIELDS
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ROBERT L. CHILDERS
RETIRED

July 13, 2019

Dear Task Force Members,

Thank you for the hard work you are doing for the State of Tennessee. As the Judge in Circuit Court, Division VIII, I urge you to leave our resources as they are here in Shelby County. Shelby County is unique in many ways as compared to other parts of Tennessee. As a single county district, we are fortunate to have many Courts to serve the needs of not only the business community but our citizens in the most expedient and efficient way possible.

I would like to point out just a few things that Shelby County contributes through our own tax base. Shelby County provides and maintains space for courts in two different buildings. The Criminal Courts are housed at 201 Poplar Avenue, while the Civil Courts are across the street at 140 Adams Avenue. In addition to the buildings, Shelby County provides funding for Assistant District Attorneys and the Public Defender's Office. It is grant funded with Shelby County providing the matching grant so that six other counties are able to participate and have law enforcement support that would not otherwise be available to them. Additionally, the judges here work to save the state resources however possible. For example, here in Circuit Court, nine judges share four assistants rather than each judge having his or her own as is the case in the rest of the state. This cooperative effort saves a large amount of money for the state each year.

Shelby County also funds two state-level judgeships in the form of our two county probate courts. This is provided in order to make sure that Shelby County's citizens have better access to the courts for probate matters rather than being handled by the Chancery courts. Similarly, Shelby County funds the Divorce Referees to help ensure that domestic support matters are handled quickly and expediently.

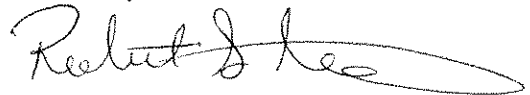
Due to being a large metropolitan area and the home to a number of international corporations, Shelby County has a volume of cases which take great time and effort that may not be the same in other districts. It is not unusual to have health care liability actions, mass tort cases, or product liability cases which may take several weeks in trial. The judges here in the 30th Judicial District work well together to make certain that judges are available when needed.

I recognize that the weighted caseload will be one of the factors being considered by committee in its analysis for resource allocation. While I participated in study, I believe that it does not give sufficient weight to certain types of cases, i.e. railroad and products liability which are frequently filed in Shelby County due to the fact that it is a distribution hub and the home to a number corporations. Further, I believe an updated study should be performed to get a current view of the Court's time.

During my fourteen (14) years in private practice, I had the opportunity to appear in most every division of Criminal, Chancery, Circuit and Probate Court. My time on the bench since 2010 has furthered my opinion that the make up here in Shelby County works well. I urge you to leave our district in its present makeup.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert S. Weiss". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Judge Robert S. Weiss