

2010 Candidate Questionnaire

SECTION I

BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot

First Name	Middle Initial or Nickname	Last Name
Richard	B	Sanders

2. Office sought (include office, jurisdiction, position/district number):

Washington State Supreme Court

3. Are you the incumbent? xYes No

4. How long have you resided in this district/city?

life

5. How long have you resided in King County?

Almost life

6. Is the office sought partisan or nonpartisan? Partisan x Nonpartisan

7. If partisan, please indicate party:

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: Friends of Justice Richard Sanders

Address: PO Box 2241

City/State/Zip: Olympia, Washington 98507

Campaign Phone: 206-337-2329

Campaign Fax: _____

Campaign E-mail: justicesanders@gmail.com

Campaign Website: friendsofjustice.com

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

1. Beginning with the most recent position, please list public offices you have held. Include positions on appointive boards or commissions.

Public Office	Elective or Appointive?	Dates Held	Leadership Role (if any)
Justice, Washington Supreme Court	elective	December 1995 to present	Several Committees, rules, budget, administrative, library, etc

2. If you ran for public office but were not elected, please list those races below:

Office Title	Year of Run

SECTION II

In this section, we are seeking responses that reflect the four ratings criteria: involvement, effectiveness, character, and knowledge. These are defined as follows:

- **Involvement:** What has the candidate done previously in family, neighborhood, community, volunteer work, employment or public life to suggest readiness to accomplish challenging objectives? How do these activities demonstrate readiness for the challenges unique to the office sought?
- **Effectiveness:** Has the candidate demonstrated promise of being productive in the office sought? Has the candidate shown the ability to work with other people?
- **Character:** Do the candidate's personal traits show the ability to take on the responsibilities of campaigning for and holding the public office she or he is seeking? Is the candidate a leader, participant or observer? Is the candidate trustworthy, reliable and candid?
- **Knowledge:** Has the candidate demonstrated the willingness and ability to learn and adapt? Does the candidate understand the duties and challenges of the office sought? Does the candidate have a firm grasp of the issues important to his or her constituency and their potential effects?

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1. In one page or less, why are you running for this office? (Note: the interview committee will be given a copy of this statement before your interview; at the beginning of your interview you will have the opportunity to expand on this statement in any way you wish.)

I have served on the Supreme Court for 15 years. During that time I have written more opinions than my colleagues; published law review articles and written for popular journals; served as an adjunct professor at the UW School of law; and lectured on legal topics nationwide. My essay on the criminal law was included in a volume with notable scholars including Richard Posner, Alan Dershowitz and Alex Kozinski. My opinions and writings are summarized and set forth at www.JusticeSanders.com. That web site says it all.

My interest on the court is to make sure it fulfills the mandate in Article 1, Section 1 of our state constitution that the purpose of government is to protect and maintain individual rights. I decide cases based on the law and the facts, not whether the result is popular. Many times an unpopular result is necessary to protect the rights of the individual. For example in 1996 I published a lone dissent in State v. Rivers which would have thrown out our three strikes law as unconstitutionally cruel punishment in the case of a young black man who stole \$300 from an espresso stand armed with a finger in his pocket. He was sentenced to life without possibility of parole. This cost me some popular support but to this day I have no regrets.

I have proposed a rule that would require trial court judges to only appoint lawyers who meet minimum bar association standards of experience and maximum case loads to represent indigent criminal defendants. Our constitutional rights, including the right to competent and effective counsel, are nonnegotiable. We cannot balance our budgets on the backs of the indigent.

I believe the role of the judge is to protect our legal rights. If he does that he should remain in office, if not, he should be retired. All other considerations are secondary, such as I was an Eagle Scout, etc.

2. Describe your most important personal characteristics or traits as they relate to the office you seek.

I am willing to think for myself and do not go along to get along. I am independent and have demonstrated that with principled decisions which are consistent across the board. I am open minded and even dissented to my own opinion on reconsideration last year (State v. Daniels)

3. Please describe, in sufficient detail, one to three accomplishments or contributions of which you are most proud. These examples should illustrate skills and capabilities you think apply to the office you are seeking. These accomplishments may have occurred at any time in your personal, professional, or public life.

I am proud of my record on the court in defense of individual rights. I have not wavered and am principled in my approach.

Article 1, Section 1 of our state constitution says that government is established to protect individual rights. I believe the Courts stand as the only recourse for many citizens when those rights are trampled. Sometimes this makes me appear controversial -- “soft on crime” or “pro-marijuana” or “pro-gun” – sometimes liberal and sometimes conservative – but what each case has in common is that an individual’s rights were unfairly taken away. It is because of this view that I have garnered support from across the political spectrum with civil libertarians, conservative activists and Criminal Defense and Trial Lawyers all helping the re-election effort.

I cannot summarize a legal and judicial career in a sound bite; however if you read my professional web site justicesanders.com, you will have a good idea of what I have tried to accomplish.

4. Please list or describe current and past activities in the community in which you have acquired skills that relate to the office you seek. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved. Involvement consists of many areas such as family, neighborhood, community, employment, or public life.

I had an active private general practice for 26 years before joining the court. I helped out in my church and Boy Scouts and various community groups.

5. Please describe the duties of the office you seek. Which are the most important duties and why?

Protect the legal rights of the litigants who come before me.