

## **Poll Process Compromised**

The results of the Judicial Preference Poll will not be published this year due to a concern about the independence of the process.

The Columbus Bar conducts the Judicial Preference Poll to provide the public with information about judicial candidates based upon the independent opinion of those lawyers who know the candidates' qualifications. Over the years, the Poll has become well-regarded as a reliable source of voter information involving the judicial candidates.

Instructions accompanying the poll specifically direct that lawyers indicate their preference based upon individual knowledge and discourage lobbying for votes based upon endorsements. This year, the Columbus Bar learned that the poll may have been compromised by significant lobbying through mass e-mail communications, contrary to those instructions. As a result, the Board of Governors determined that the results cannot confidently be published as serving the purpose for which the poll was originally intended. The Columbus Bar did not review the ballots, and advised its auditors to dispose of them without disclosing any results to the Columbus Bar.

The Board stands by the findings of the Judicial Screening Committee included with the Preference Poll. The Judicial Screening Committee is a merit-based, non-partisan source for information about judicial candidates. The politically balanced committee is comprised of attorneys representative of the Franklin County legal community with due consideration given to age, gender, race, courts of practice, type of practice, and political affiliation.

### **2008 Judicial Screening Committee Findings**

Lawrence Belskis: Highly Recommended  
Eric Brown: Acceptable  
Richard Brown: Highly Recommended  
John Connor: Highly Recommended  
Shawn Dingus: Acceptable  
David Goodman: Not Recommended  
Lisa Sadler: Highly Recommended  
Richard Sheward: Highly Recommended