

## Sens. Nelson, Rubio appoint the state's Federal Judicial Nominating Commission

Statewide judicial nominating panel members selected by Florida's two U.S. senators have released the makeup of Florida's Federal Judicial Nomination Commission, a revamped statewide panel that's charged with selecting nominees for presidential appointments to federal judgeships, U.S. attorneys, and U.S. marshals.

The two senators revamped the membership of the JNC to account for the election of Sen. Marco Rubio. Under the JNC's rules, the 64-member commission recommends candidates to the state's two senators. The senators then interview and forward the names to the White House, unless they object to a specific candidate's appointment.

"It's long been the tradition of Florida's senators to work together and keep politics out of the process of selecting candidates for judicial posts," Sen. Bill Nelson said.

"This commission will be fundamental to finding qualified men and women for consideration and vetting by the Senate," said Rubio.

Tampa lawyer John Fitzgibbons, who was selected two years ago to lead the statewide panel, will continue to hold the post. Fitzgibbons is a former assistant U.S. attorney in the Middle District of Florida.

The JNC is divided into three geographic conferences, one for each judicial district. The first order of business for the JNC likely will be recommending replacements for Judge Alan S. Gold of the Southern District of Florida, Judge Richard A. Lazzara of the Middle District of Florida, and Chief U.S. District Judge Stephan P. Mickle of the Northern District of Florida. Gold retired in January. Mickle and Lazzara are set to retire in June and December, respectively.

Following are the members of the JNC.

• **Northern District:** Linda Shelley (chair), Silvia Alderman, Nancy Aliff, Jim Appleman, John Aurell, DUBY Ausley, Martha Barnett, Philip Bates, Christopher Chestnut, William Harrison, Melanie Ann Hines, Don Hinkle, William Large, Doug Mannheimer, Jon Mills, Daryl Parks, Danny Ponce, Buzz Ritchie, Don Rubottom, Leander Shaw, and Bentina Terry.

• **Middle District:** Wayne Hogan (chair), Tyler Cathey, Steve Cheeseman, Daniel DeCubellis, WC Gentry, Dan Gerber, Nat Glover, Jonathan Kilman, Mike Maher, Susan McCaskill, Trudy McKibbe Reed, Ben Newman, Hugh Normile, Steve Pajcic, Marsha Santana Rydberg, Carol Saviak, Harry Shorstein, Bruce Smathers, Bruce Strayhorn, Bill Wilson, and Gwynne Young.

• **Southern District:** Kendall Coffey (chair), Georgina Angones, Reginald Clyne, Vivian de las Cuevas-Diaz, Al Dotson, Philip Frieden, John Genovese, Carrie Goodman, Evelyn Greer, Cynthia Johnson-Stacks, Manny Kadre, Eduardo Lacasa, Ira Leesfield, Dexter Lehtinen, Chuck Lichtman, Richard Lydecker, Tom Panza, David Prather, Dennis Richard, Jon A. Sale, and Chris Searcy.