

What They Are Saying:

Florida Judicial Retention: 2012



The New York Times

A Battle for Florida's Courts

Some conservatives are trying to purge three moderate justices facing a retention vote in November: R. Fred Lewis, Barbara Pariente and Peggy Quince. The only democratic appointees on the state's seven-member court, they are being singled out for various rulings... this year's antiretention drive, which is being led by a group based in Orlando with ties to the Tea Party, Restore Justice 2012, appears more robust, and it is being aided and abetted by the Republican governor, Rick Scott... If the three justices lose their retention battle, it would give Mr. Scott three court vacancies to fill with his own judicial picks. ***It would also send a message of intimidation and undermining judicial independence and impartiality—a price no Florida voter should be willing to pay.***

July 30, 2012

SunSentinel

Voters Must Decide on Justices

Rick Scott still wants to use the legal system to disqualify three Florida Supreme Court justices who are up for retention in the fall. Three words, Governor: Let it go!... ***Governor Scott's continued efforts amount to little more than a ham fisted attempt to pack the state's high court.*** The governor has made his contempt for the court clear since 2010... The three justices are now on the November ballot, subject to an up or down vote for merit retention. Unfortunately, they've also become targets of right-wing efforts by outside groups to drive them from the bench.

July 20, 2012

The Palm Beach Post

Political Witch Hunt Threatens Florida Supreme Court

The system is not designed to remove justices just because voters disagree with a ruling or two. It is designed to remove justices who are ignoring the law or are incompetent. But ***politicians who disagree with how these justices have ruled want to corrupt the system...*** There already was an organized campaign to defeat the three justices. Now that campaign can run ads saying that the justices are under investigation, even if it's a trumped-up, bogus investigation. If the campaign succeeds, Governor Scott gets his three picks for the high court.

Randy Schultz, June 16, 2012

The Washington Post

Super PACs, Donors Turn Their Sights on Judicial Branch

Each has been in office since the 1990s, each retained by voters overwhelmingly in previous elections, and each now reluctantly campaigning—***for the first time...*** The mere possibility that a rich benefactor or interest group with endless amounts of money could swoop in, write massive checks, and remake an entire court for ideological reasons has prompted judges here in Florida and elsewhere to prepare for battles ***they never expected to***

Steve Canon, March 29, 2012