

2014 APR 17 AM 10:49

Letter of Nomination

April 16, 2014

The Honorable City Council
One City Hall Plaza, Second Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear President Kernighan and members of the City Council

Pursuant to City Charter section 601, the Mayor, hereby appoints the following person as a member of the following Board or Commission, subject to the City Council's confirmation

PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION

Sonya Smith Mayoral appointment to serve the term beginning January 22, 2014 and ending January 21, 2017, filling the seat previously held by Aspen Baker

Thank you for your assistance in this matter

Sincerely,

Jean Quan
Mayor

SONYA R. SMITH

January 7, 2014

Mayor Jean Quan
1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza
3rd Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Mayor Quan,

I write to express my interest in serving on the Oakland Public Ethics Commission. I am a homeowner in the Santa Fe neighborhood and have been an Oakland resident for about ten years. I have a strong interest in the work of the Public Ethics Commission and feel that my background in ethics enforcement, rule of law, and policymaking prepares me to make a meaningful contribution to Oakland as a member of the PEC.

I am currently employed as an attorney for the Commission on Judicial Performance, the state constitutional body charged with enforcing California's Code of Judicial Ethics as it applies to the judges of the Superior, Appellate, and Supreme Courts. The rules enforced by the Commission on Judicial Performance include those governing judicial election campaigns and judges' reporting requirements to the Fair Political Practices Commission

My background includes international work on Rule of Law projects through the American Bar Association and other USAID funded organizations. I served as the director of a Rule of Law project in Yerevan, Armenia between 2006 and 2008 and have also worked on Rule of Law projects in Serbia, The Republic of Georgia, and Ecuador. These broad-reaching projects shared the common goal of building strong, independent, and transparent legal and political institutions that engender public trust and confidence.

Before serving with the American Bar Association's Rule of Law Initiative in Armenia I worked as an attorney for the California Judicial Council. In that capacity, I made policy recommendations and drafted rules of court, legislation, and state constitutional provisions relating to the administration of justice and judicial independence.

I believe these experiences have prepared me to make a positive contribution to Oakland as a member of the Public Ethics Commission. It would be a great honor to serve Oakland in this way. Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

SRS
Sonya Smith

SONYA R. SMITH

EDUCATION

Boalt Hall School of Law, University of California, Berkeley
J.D., International Law Society, Co-Chair
University of Washington, Seattle
B.A., *cum laude*, Jackson School of International Studies

BAR MEMBERSHIP

State Bar of California (1997), Washington Bar Association (2001), American Bar Association

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

- Staff Counsel, California Commission on Judicial Performance** 2009-present
- Assessing ethics complaints against judges in the California Courts
 - Advising the constitutional body charged with enforcing the Code of Judicial Ethics
- Director, American Bar Association (ABA) Rule of Law Initiative**, Yerevan, Armenia 2006-2008
- Led multi-faceted legal reform project to promote the rule of law in Armenia through cooperation with judicial leaders, law schools, government officials, bar associations, and NGOs
 - Developed and led programs in judicial reform, legal education reform, legal profession reform, human rights, and voters' rights advocacy
 - Supervised American and Armenian lawyers, researchers, interpreters, and other staff
- Judicial Reform Specialist, ABA Rule of Law Initiative**, Yerevan, Armenia 2005
- Supported the Armenian Judges Association in the development and adoption of a new Code of Judicial Conduct and in judicial ethics education
 - Collaborated with the Armenian Cassation (Supreme) Court and Judges Association to seek constitutional, statutory, and administrative reforms to protect judicial independence
- Senior Attorney, Judicial Council of California**, San Francisco, CA 1999-2005
- Served as counsel to the Judicial Council's Executive Committee
 - Drafted rules of court and proposals for policy, legislative, and constitutional reforms
 - Researched and authored reports on legal and policy issues for the Judicial Council of California, the legislature, and trial court presiding judges
 - Managed nomination process for the Judicial Council and its 20 policy committees and coordinated the work of the committees
- Attorney, Office of the Public Defender (Alternate Defender)**, Contra Costa County, CA 1996-1999
- Represented indigent clients in all proceedings in criminal cases and juvenile delinquency and dependency cases
 - Conducted numerous jury trials, court trials, and motion hearings
 - Researched and wrote motions in felony, misdemeanor, and juvenile cases
 - Independently managed high volume case load

PRACTICAL LEGAL EDUCATION

1994-1996

Law Clerk, Office of the Public Defender, Alameda County, CA

- Wrote and argued motions in felony cases

Law Clerk, Prison Law Office, San Quentin, CA

- Performed legal research and discovery in prisoner class action litigation

Law Clerk, Berkeley Community Law Center, Berkeley, CA

- Advocated for clients seeking Social Security disability benefits

Judicial Extern, District Court Judge Claudia Wilken, San Francisco, CA

- Researched and drafted proposed orders and memoranda in constitutional and labor law cases

PRO BONO WORK

Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights Asylum Program, San Francisco, CA

East Bay Sanctuary Covenant Refugee Project, Berkeley, CA

OTHER EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

English Teacher, American University Language School, Bangkok, Thailand

Researcher, Ministry of Rural Education, La Paz, Bolivia

LANGUAGES

Spanish

REPRESENTATIVE POLICY AND LEGAL REFORM PROJECTS

POLICY ANALYSIS

- Role of Subordinate Judicial Officers (California, 2001)
- Duties and Titles of Subordinate Judicial Officers (California, 2002)
- Temporary Judges and the Code of Judicial Ethics (California, 2003)
- Judicial Sabbaticals as a Retention Policy (California, 2003)
- Board Policy Governance Model for the Judicial Council (California, 2004)
- Judicial Council Membership Composition (California, 2001)

COURT ADMINISTRATION

- Evaluation of the 58 Trial Court Strategic Plans (California, 1999-2002)
- Court Statistics Report (California, 2000-2004, Editorial Staff)
- Workload Increases in an Era of Declining Filings (California, 2002)
- Revenue Enhancement Proposals to Offset State Budget Deficit (California, 2002)
- Structural Change Proposals to Offset State Budget Deficit (California, 2002)

ASSESSMENTS

- Judicial Reform Index (Armenia, 2005, Editorial Staff)
- Legal Education Reform Index (Armenia, 2007, Editorial Staff)
- Judicial Reform Index (Armenia, 2007, Editorial Staff)
- Commentary on Plea Bargaining Provisions in Code of Criminal Procedure (Armenia, 2007)
- Cameras in the Courts: Evaluation of Rule 980 (California, 2001)

SEMINAR PAPERS PRESENTED

- Enforcement of Judicial Ethics Structural Models (Republic of Georgia, 2005)
- Applying Case Precedent (Armenia, 2007)

RULE OF LAW PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

JUDICIAL REFORM

- Provided technical assistance to Association of Judges of the Republic of Armenia on adoption of new Code of Judicial Conduct and on a judicial handbook to accompany the code
- Worked with the Association of Judges of the Republic of Armenia through the constitutional reform process to comment on and propose changes to promote judicial independence
- Developed first "case law" training curriculum for Armenian Judges

LEGAL PROFESSION REFORM

- Provided technical assistance on the development and administration of two bar examinations
- Developed continuing legal education program for Bar Association
- Provided technical assistance on the development of an attorney discipline system
- Supported institutional development of Bar Association through assistance on governance structures

CRIMINAL LAW

- Partnered with Bar Association to establish the first Public Defender Office in Armenia and in the region
- Provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Justice on amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code
- Conducted trainings on criminal advocacy skills

LEGAL EDUCATION REFORM

- Supported the leading state university in developing its first legal research and writing course, including the development of a syllabus, course book, and teaching materials
- Managed three law school based legal clinics, where students learned practical lawyering skills and provided free legal aid to those in need
- Developed a successful street law and public legal education program

ELECTION LAW

- Administered nation-wide election legal aid program, with toll-free hotline, volunteer lawyers, and mobile cars of advocates to provide on site legal assistance on election day

FILED
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
OAKLAND

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APPROVED FOR FORM AND LEGALITY

DRAFT

CITY ATTORNEY

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION No. _____ C.M.S.

RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE MAYOR'S APPOINTMENT OF SONYA SMITH TO THE PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION

WHEREAS, Section 202 of the City Charter provides that the Public Ethics Commission consists of seven (7) members serving three-year terms with three members appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council and four members appointed by the affirmative vote of at least four members of the Commission, and

WHEREAS, the Oakland City Charter, Section 202 created the Public Ethics Commission with functions prescribed by Ordinance no 11961 C M S , adopted January 28, 1997 and Ordinance N 12101 C M S , adopted December 8, 1998, to oversee compliance with the City of Oakland Campaign Reform Ordinance, Code of Ethics, Conflict of Interest regulations pertaining to City elected officials, officers, employees, and members of Boards and Commissions, the Limited Public Financing Act, the Lobbyist Registration Act, and the Oakland Sunshine Ordinance, and to review policies and programs relating to elections and campaigns, as well as to review and adjust City Council salaries in every odd-numbered year, and

WHEREAS, the Honorable Mayor Jean Quan has appointed Sonya Smith to serve a three year term subject to confirmation by the City Council, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that pursuant to City Charter section 22, the City Council hereby confirms the Mayor's appointment of Sonya Smith to the Public Ethics Commission for a three-year term beginning January 22, 2014 and ending January 21, 2017, filling the seat previously held by Aspen Baker

**IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,
PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:**

- AYES - BROOKS, GALLO, GIBSON MCELHANEY, KALB, KAPLAN, REID, SCHAAF, AND PRESIDENT KERNIGHAN
- NOES -
- ABSTENTIONS-
- ABSENT-

ATTEST

 LATONDA SIMMONS
 City Clerk and Clerk of the Oakland City Council