



# Louisiana Judicial Campaign Oversight Committee

400 ROYAL STREET  
SUITE 1190

New Orleans, Louisiana

70130-8101

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CONTACT: VALERIE WILLARD  
504.310.2590

## PUBLIC STATEMENT

Every candidate for judicial office in Louisiana must campaign in accordance with the precepts contained in Canon 7 of the Louisiana Code of Judicial Conduct. The Louisiana Judicial Campaign Oversight Committee is authorized by the Louisiana Supreme Court to review and investigate complaints which allege violations of certain provisions of Canon 7 of the Code of Judicial Conduct.

The Judicial Campaign Oversight Committee has received a complaint which alleges that Ellen Kovach, a candidate for a judgeship in the 24<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court, violated Canon 7B(1)(d)(iii) of the Code of Judicial Conduct. Canon 7B(1)(d)(iii) provides that judges and judicial candidates shall not "while a proceeding is pending in any Louisiana state court, make any public comment that might reasonably be expected to affect its outcome or impair its fairness." The complaint concerns a mailer that was sent out on behalf of Ms. Kovach by her campaign committee. The mailer includes the statement "Getting Away With More Than Murder" in reference to a specific criminal defendant whose case is pending in the division of the 24<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court to which Ms. Kovach seeks election. If elected, she may well preside over this case. One of the reasons Canon 7B(1)(d)(iii) prohibits comment on pending cases is to assure that there is no appearance that the guilt or innocence of a defendant is pre-determined by the judge presiding over the case. The Committee believes that this statement from Ms. Kovach's campaign mailer is in violation of Canon 7B(1)(d)(iii).

*Harry S Hardin III*

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Judicial Campaign Oversight Committee  
Harry S. Hardin, III, Chair