



# Louisiana Judicial Campaign Oversight Committee

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## 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 (“the Committee”) is authorized by the Louisiana Supreme Court to review and investigate complaints, which allege violations of certain provisions of Canon 7. Although Committee deliberations are and remain confidential, once a public statement has been issued and/or a complaint has been dismissed, the complaint and response are matters of public record and may be requested through the Court’s Community Relations division.

The Committee received a complaint against Ronald Johnson, a candidate for the 19th Judicial District Court, ES 2, Div. L. The Committee finds that the conduct complained of violates Canon 7A(9), which provides that a judge or judicial candidate shall not “knowingly make, or cause to be made, a false statement concerning the identity, qualifications, present position, or other fact concerning the candidate or an opponent.”

The complaint concerns a mailer that was created by the Committee to Elect Ronald Johnson, which asserts that Ronald Johnson’s opponent, Jewel E. “Trae” Welch, has no civil court, probate court, or family court experience in the 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court. Ronald Johnson and the Committee to Elect Ronald Johnson also posted this mailer on their respective Facebook pages along with the statement: “According to the Advocate, my opponent used the term ‘gulf’ to describe the gap between his experience and myself. However, here is the truth

which can be confirmed through the East Baton Rouge Clerk of Court's Office." A review of the public records of the East Baton Rouge Clerk of Court's Office, however, demonstrate that Mr. Welch has in fact handled numerous civil, probate, and family law cases. The Committee believes that the mailer and statements made by the Johnson Campaign mislead the public and misrepresent Mr. Welch's legal experience in violation of Canon 7A(9).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Zeno', written in a cursive style.

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Louisiana Judicial Campaign Oversight Committee  
Judge Melvin C. Zeno (ret.), Chair