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NEW MEXICO JUDICIAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION COMMISSION ANNOUNCES
APPOINTMENT OF FORMER NEW MEXICO SUPREME COURT CHIEF JUSTICES

SANTA FE, NM – The **New Mexico Judicial Performance Evaluation Commission (JPEC)** has announced the appointment of retired Chief Justice **Gene E. Franchini** as vice chair. Franchini served as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New Mexico from 1997-1999 and was on the Supreme Court for 12 years.

“While on the Supreme Court, Justice Franchini recognized our state’s voters needed accurate, objective information about judges and justices standing for retention. He helped establish the JPEC, so we are extremely pleased to have him as a member of the Commission,” said Felix Briones, Jr., chair of JPEC.

Prior to his retirement from the New Mexico Supreme Court in 2002, Franchini served on the bench for a total of 18 years, including serving as a district court judge in the Second Judicial District for six years. He was in private legal practice in Albuquerque for 24 years, was admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court in 1973 and has been a member of the State Bar of New Mexico for 48 years. Franchini currently provides arbitration, mediation and counseling through his consulting firm, Dispute Resolutions, P.A.

A native of Albuquerque, he received his Bachelor of Business Administration degree from the University of New Mexico, his Juris Doctor degree from Georgetown University and his LLM (Master of Laws) degree from the University of Virginia.

He is currently a member of the New Mexico Bar Association, the Albuquerque Bar Association, the New Mexico Trial Lawyers Association and the American Board of Trial Advocates.

Franchini has been involved in the High School Mock Trial competition in New Mexico for more than 20 years and has served as a scoring or presiding judge in the National Finals and National Championship Round for 14 years.

He has served as co-chair of the New Mexico Commission on Professionalism, a liaison justice of the New Mexico Board of Bar Examiners, and second vice president and a member of the board of directors of the Conference of Chief Justices. His professional and community service also includes previous positions as a staff judge advocate for the New Mexico Air National Guard, president of the New Mexico Trial Lawyers Association, a member of the board of directors of the Albuquerque Bar Association, chair of the City of Albuquerque Personnel Board, chair of the City of Albuquerque Labor Relations Board, chair of the City of Albuquerque Interim Board of Ethics, co-chair of the New Mexico Medical-Legal Board, and chair of the Board of Trustees of Heights General Hospital.

Franchini was appointed to fill the vice chair position vacated by Thomas Donnelly of Santa Fe. Donnelly had been a member of JPEC since 2001. He served on the bench for 44 years including 27

years on the New Mexico Court of Appeals and eight years as a district court judge in the First Judicial District.

The Supreme Court of New Mexico formally created JPEC in 1997 to improve the performance of New Mexico's judges and to provide useful, credible information to New Mexico voters on judges standing for retention during elections.

In New Mexico, all appellate, district, and metropolitan court judges who have previously been elected in a partisan election are required to stand for retention. They must receive 57 percent voter approval in order to retain their office.

The Judicial Performance Evaluation Commission is comprised of 15 individuals – seven lawyers and eight non-lawyers, who are appointed by the Supreme Court to staggered terms. Members are selected from nominations made by the Governor, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Speaker of the House, Senate President Pro Tem, House Minority Leader, Senate Minority Leader and President of the State Bar. The Commission must be broadly representative of the state, geographically, politically and otherwise.

For more information about the Judicial Performance Evaluation Commission, interested individuals may call **Louise Baca-Sena**, project manager, at **(505) 827-4960**, email aocimb@nmcourts.com or visit the Commission's website at www.nmjpec.org.