

**AMERICAN JUDICATURE SOCIETY  
WASHINGTON CHAPTER**

*February 22, 2005*

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Senator Adam Kline  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
PO Box 40437  
Olympia, WA 98504-0556

Re: SB 5015 and SJR 8200 BY EMAIL AND 1<sup>ST</sup> CLASS MAIL

Dear Senator Kline:

The Washington Chapter of the American Judicature Society supports the concept of merit appointment of judges as set forth in SJR 8200 and SB 5015, with the addition of the proposed amendments of the King County Bar Association. This bill would establish a nominating commission that would provide nominees to the Governor for appointment to mid-term vacancies on the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court.

The AJS Board also supports SJR 8200 provided that it is amended to assure that statutes regarding mid-term appellate court vacancies will establish a "nominating commission" comprising members who are nonpartisan, who are diverse ethnically and geographically, and who are primarily non-attorneys.

The American Judicature Society has a long-standing commitment to judicial selection methods that result in the highest quality judges and to judicial independence. This proposed legislation helps to ensure the quality of appointed judges. The Board supports this concept. SB 5015 would give citizens an opportunity for meaningful participation in filling mid-term vacancies on Washington's appellate courts.

Sincerely,



Mary Wechsler  
President, Washington Chapter  
American Judicature Society

Cc: AJS Washington Members