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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 7, 2009

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**BETTER COURTS FOR MISSOURI CALLS ON CHIEF JUSTICE STITH TO END
COURT LOBBYING AND POLITICAL ACTIVITY**

“Justice Stith should remind her subordinates of the ethical canons governing their behavior and the ramifications of violating these canons.” – James Harris, Executive Director, Better Courts for Missouri

(Jefferson City, MO) – Today, Better Courts for Missouri (BCM) called on Missouri Supreme Court Chief Justice Laura Denvir Stith to end the Court’s lobbying against House Joint Resolution 10 (HJR 10).

“The Supreme Court is the final arbiter of the constitutionality of legislation adopted by the Missouri General Assembly. How can the Court be neutral in these actions while also involving themselves in lobbying against various measures that come before the House and Senate?” said James Harris, Executive Director of Better Courts for Missouri.

“Over the past few weeks, state personnel and judges have engaged in lobbying and political activity,” said Harris. “These judges have taken an oath to uphold the Constitution of the State of Missouri. Maybe they should be reminded that Article V, Section 25(f) prohibits judges from being involved in political activity. Lobbying against a measure that is being heard in the Missouri Legislature and will ultimately be placed before the public for a vote violates not only the letter of the law, but the very essence of the judicial system,” said Harris.

“I immediately call on Supreme Court Chief Justice Stith to remind members of her court that they should immediately cease any and all lobbying efforts,” said Harris. “Justice Stith should remind her subordinates of the ethical canons governing their behavior and the ramifications of violating those canons. This conduct is unbecoming of a Judge and she should know better. While they might owe their allegiance to the special interests who hand-picked them behind closed doors, Missourians deserve better.”

HJR 10 is a measure that would allow the citizens of Missouri to vote on whether or not they wish to see more transparency in the judicial selection process and if they wanted additional accountability measures placed on how judges are selected in Missouri. Currently, judges for the state’s highest courts are selected via a secretive process dominated by trial attorneys.

To help Chief Justice Stith right this wrong, Better Courts for Missouri will gladly supply her with the names of the justices on the Supreme Court, the Southern District Court of Appeals and the Western District Court of Appeals who have been engaging in political activity upon request.

To schedule an interview with James Harris, Executive Director, Better Courts for Missouri, please contact James at 573-761-7875 or james@thejharriscompany.com.