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**COURTS**  
**FOR**  
**MISSOURI**

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**BCM WELCOMES JUSTICE PRICE TO THE DEBATE  
OVER MISSOURI PLAN REFORM**

Jefferson City, Missouri – Today, Better Courts for Missouri (BCM) praised Missouri Supreme Court Justice Ray Price for acknowledging that the Missouri Plan could be improved. Justice Price is slated to become the Chief justice on July 1, 2009, replacing current Chief Justice Laura Denvir Stith.

“While we are excited that Justice Price is showing he has an open mind by embracing a few changes, we urge him to carefully examine the very moderate but necessary changes that were debated in the Missouri General Assembly this past legislative session,” stated James Harris, Executive Director of BCM. “Justice Price’s position represents a dramatic and welcome shift in tactics from the current Chief Justice, who has taken the absurd position that the Missouri Plan is perfect.”

Harris dismissed the extent to which Price’s proposed changes would solve the current crisis, stating, “Substantively, his statements should be viewed as a small step in the right direction because the changes he has embraced would be mere window dressing if not packaged with other changes designed to introduce openness and accountability, but we look forward to working with Justice Price to find common ground and ensure Missourians have access to a fair and impartial judiciary,” concluded Harris.

Currently, Missouri’s Supreme Court Judges, Appellate Judges, and certain other Judges are selected by a commission which is comprised of three members chosen by the Governor, three members chosen by lawyers, and the Chief Justice of the Missouri Supreme Court. In the current system, a majority of members of the judicial selection commission are either trial attorneys or have strong ties to them.

To schedule an interview with James Harris, Executive Director, Better Courts for Missouri, please contact him at (573)-761-7875, [james@thejharriscompany.com](mailto:james@thejharriscompany.com)

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