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COURTS
FOR
MISSOURI

info@newmoplan.com | PO Box 1524 Jefferson City Missouri 65102

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For More Information, Contact:
James Harris (573-761-7875)

BCM Files Initiative Petition to take Judicial Selection Reform Directly to the People

Amendment would have Missouri adopt a federal model for judicial selection

(Jefferson City, MO) – Better Courts for Missouri (BCM) submitted an initiative petition with the Secretary of State’s office this morning to reform the judicial selection process by asking Missouri citizens to adopt a more accountable and transparent selection process, similar to what our federal government has used for more than 200 years. Pursuant to Article III Section 50 of the Constitution of Missouri and Chapter 116 RsMO the proposed Amendment to the Constitution of the State of Missouri was submitted.

“We are taking this issue directly to the people because the courts are important to every citizen. Missourians should have a say in who sits on their high courts, not just elite trial attorneys. The initiative petition is an important right for Missourians,” stated BCM member Larry Russell.

Currently, the Appellate Judicial Commission meets in secret, and they assert that Missouri’s sunshine law does not apply to them. This atmosphere of secrecy has allowed elite legal industry interest groups to use the commission as a platform to advance their interests. All of the lawyer members under the “non-partisan” judicial selection system are or were on the Board of Governors of Missouri Association of Trial Attorneys (MATA).

“While opponents of the federal model may claim is too political, the problem with Missouri’s selection scheme is that the politics are hidden behind closed doors in smoke-filled rooms, and Missourians have no idea their courts have been taken over by political special interests,” added Harris.

A copy of the proposed constitutional amendment is attached. For more information on Better Courts for Missouri, please visit www.NewMOPlan.com or call (573) 761-7875.

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