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National Briefing | Washington: Judicial Complaint Committee Meets

By LINDA GREENHOUSE (NYT)

The Supreme Court was the site of the first meeting of a committee established by Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist to study the handling of complaints against judges of the lower federal courts. The committee is headed by Justice Stephen G. Breyer, left, with four other federal judges and the chief justice's administrative assistant, Sally M. Rider, as members. When the committee was announced last month, its mission was widely misunderstood to be a review of judicial ethics. Instead, Justice Breyer said, its task is the "narrow but important" one of evaluating the effectiveness of the 1980 law that set procedures for handling complaints about judicial misconduct. The committee will begin by examining a sample of complaints against judges during the last several years. Linda Greenhouse (NYT)