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NEWS

Western NY Lawmaker Poised for Move to State Supreme Court

Assemblyman Michael J. Norris, R-Lockport, said on Thursday that he's accepted nominations for state Supreme Court justice of the 8th Judicial District by Republican, Democratic and Conservative parties in the Nov. 5 general election.

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Judges



Brian Lee

Litigation Reporter



What You Need to Know

- In uncontested race, WNY GOP legislator Michael Norris abandoning reelection bid to accept cross-nomination for state Supreme Court.
- Nearby 7th Judicial District has a four-way race for two seats on the trial court.
- There are very few vacancies for state Supreme Court upstate.

A cross-endorsed Republican member of the New York Legislature is poised to claim one of the few openings upstate on the Empire State's trial court bench.

Assemblyman Michael J. Norris, R-Lockport, said on Thursday that he's accepted nominations for state Supreme Court justice of the 8th Judicial District by Republican, Democratic and Conservative parties in the Nov. 5 general election.

For the three other vacancies, GOP and Democratic judicial delegates in the district cross-endorsed Republican incumbent Judge Deborah A. Chimes, and incumbent Democratic Judges Henry J. Nowak and Catherine Nugent Panepinto of Erie County.

Norris, a listed partner in the Lockport law firm Seaman Norris, practicing in estate administration, said in a statement that it wasn't an easy decision to forgo a reelection bid to the state's lower legislative chamber, where he's sat since January 2017.

"However, after careful consideration, I know that if elected judge, this extraordinary responsibility will allow me to use my years of public service and legal experience to have an even greater impact on the daily lives of Western New Yorkers," he said.

In saluting the exiting lawmaker's service, Assembly Minority Leader Will Barclay, R-Oswego, said Norris' "knowledge of our election laws is unrivaled, and his passion for justice, government transparency and election laws make him an excellent choice to serve on the bench."

The judicial district spans Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans and Wyoming counties.

Meanwhile, the Seventh Judicial District encompassing Cayuga, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne and Yates counties will be a contested race between four lawyers vying for two seats.

Democratic delegates on Monday endorsed Erin Skinner, the confidential law clerk of Appellate Division, Fourth Department Justice Mark A. Montour, and Monroe County Attorney John Bringewatt, according to Wayne County Democratic Committee Chairman Scott Comegys.

GOP delegates said they endorsed Monroe County Family Court Judge and acting Supreme Court Justice Stacey Romeo, and veteran Seneca County attorney Ed White.

State Supreme Court judges serve 14-year terms and are paid \$232,600 annually.

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