



United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

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NEWS RELEASE

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Federal Public Defender Steven Wax Reappointed in District of Oregon

SAN FRANCISCO — Federal Public Defender Steven Wax of the District of Oregon has been reappointed to a seventh four-year term by the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. The reappointment, announced today by Ninth Circuit Chief Judge Mary M. Schroeder, is effective January 20, 2008.

Mr. Wax has served as the District of Oregon's federal public defender since the office was established in 1983. He is currently among the longest-tenured federal defenders in the nation.

"Steve Wax is fast becoming the dean of federal defenders nationally. He has been an outstanding advocate for indigent defendants in Oregon and also made significant contributions at the Ninth Circuit level," Judge Schroeder said.

Mr. Wax currently serves on the Ninth Circuit's Capital Case Committee, which monitors and makes recommendations on management of capital cases in the federal courts.

Mr. Wax received his undergraduate degree from Colgate University in 1970 and his J.D. from Harvard Law School in 1974. Following law school, he clerked for United States District Judge James Fitzgerald of Alaska. He also has served as an assistant district attorney for Kings County, New York; as an adjunct lecturer at the State University of New York; public defender for Broome County, New York; and as an adjunct professor at Northwestern School of Law, Lewis & Clark College.

Mr. Wax has been honored with the Oregon State Bar Public Service Merit Award and as Distinguished Adjunct Professor of Law. He has volunteered his time extensively to various legal organizations including as director of the Oregon Council on Crime and

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Delinquency, chairman of the National Federal Defender Advisory group of the Administrative Office of the Courts, ethics prosecutor and judge for the Oregon State Bar, and member of the Multnomah Bar Association Indigent Defense Committee and the Oregon State Bar Ethics Committee.

The Federal Public Defender for the District of Oregon has a staff of 70, including 20 attorneys, and maintains offices in Portland, Eugene, and Medford.

Congress created the Office of the Federal Public Defender to fulfill the constitutional requirement that indigents charged with crimes in the federal justice system be provided with professional legal representation at no cost. Congress funds the Offices of the Federal Public Defender through the Defender Services Division of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts. By statute, the judges of the court of appeals select and appoint the Federal Public Defender for a renewable term of four years.

The court makes its initial appointment after a nationwide recruitment and the use of a local screening committee pursuant to EEO guidelines. A Federal Public Defender may be reappointed if the court concludes that he or she is performing in a highly satisfactory manner based upon a broad survey and performance evaluation process.

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