



Judicial Qualifications Commission
State of Georgia
www.gajqc.com

JQC Statement on Former Ware County State Court Judicial Candidate
Sean Simmons

May 13, 2020 – The Judicial Qualifications Commission of Georgia (“JQC”) is the State agency charged with the responsibility and authority to discipline, remove and cause involuntary retirement of judges. In the State of Georgia, both judicial candidates and judges are bound by the Code of Judicial Conduct and should strive to conform their conduct to the Canons and Rules contained therein.

On April 23, 2020, the JQC received information related to the campaign activities of judicial candidate Sean Simmons, who was running for State Court Judge in Ware County. Upon receipt of this information, the JQC conducted a preliminary investigation to determine whether any of Mr. Simmons’ campaign activities, statements or advertising constituted a violation of the Code of Judicial Conduct. As a result of that preliminary investigation and findings by the JQC’s Special Committee on election matters, contact was made with Mr. Simmons to address those findings.

According to the Rules which govern the JQC, Mr. Simmons was asked to respond in writing to the results of the JQC’s preliminary investigation. In response, Mr. Simmons made the voluntary decision to withdraw from the Ware County State Court judicial race. The JQC does not have the authority to disqualify judicial candidates from elections; therefore, any decision to withdraw from a judicial election amid an ongoing JQC investigation is entirely up to the judicial candidate.

The JQC is committed to serving the State of Georgia and its citizens by fairly and objectively enforcing the rules which govern it, thereby ensuring that both judges and judicial candidates conduct themselves according to the Code of Judicial Conduct. Judges, judicial candidates, interested parties, and the public are encouraged to contact the JQC with questions or concerns about ethical obligations and conduct of judges or judicial candidates during this election cycle or at any other time.

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