



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE of PENNSYLVANIA COURTS

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Chief Justice Expresses Appreciation to Jurors**

**HARRISBURG, May 8, 2009** - Chief Justice of Pennsylvania Ronald D. Castille today thanked more than 60,000 citizens who served on juries and thousands more who appeared for jury duty but were not seated for trials across the Commonwealth during the past year.

In observance of Juror Appreciation Week, Monday May 11 through Friday May 15, Chief Justice Castille issued the following statement:

"One of the most fundamental rights of the American people is the right to a jury trial in criminal and civil cases. But to ensure that right, the people themselves must be willing to play a role in the justice system. They must occasionally be willing to set aside personal business and respond to the call to serve.

"Historically, the American colonists took the power of trial by jury from the king of England by revolution, that right having been denied them through bitterly hated British laws known as the Navigation Acts. The Declaration of Independence denounced the king 'for depriving us in many cases of the benefits of trial by jury.'

"With the American Revolution, the people of this nation asserted their right to be free and self-governing. The right to a jury trial was written into Article Three of the Constitution in 1787. The same right was reasserted in the Bill of Rights in the Sixth and Seventh Amendments in 1791.

"Those rights are built into our history and our heritage. That is why this week we honor those Pennsylvania citizens who, by serving as jurors during the past year, have kept faith with the founders of their nation and helped to keep the principles of Democracy alive. We encourage all citizens to do the same."

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