



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE of PENNSYLVANIA COURTS

NEWS RELEASE

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Chief Justice Castille Thanks Jurors and Reminds Citizens of Importance of Jury Duty

HARRISBURG, May 16, 2011 –In celebration of Juror Appreciation Week, Pennsylvania State Supreme Court Chief Justice Ronald D. Castille today thanked the thousands of Pennsylvanians who have served on juries across the commonwealth over the past year.

The Pennsylvania Senate passed a resolution that the week of May 16th is Juror Appreciation Week. The Chief Justice’s statement is below:

“One of the most fundamental rights of the American people is the right to a jury trial in criminal and civil cases. The right to a jury trial was written into Article Three of the U.S. Constitution in 1787. The same right was reasserted in the Bill of Rights in the Sixth and Seventh Amendments in 1791.

“To ensure this 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. Each year thousands of Pennsylvanians answer that call by serving as fair and impartial jurors in communities throughout the state.

“A jury of one’s peers is a cornerstone of American jurisprudence and one of the principal means by which our citizens take part in the public life of this nation. Juries represent the common sense of ordinary people, keeping the administration of law in accord with the wishes and beliefs of the community. By entrusting jurors from the community to decide legal cases, some of them involving millions of dollars or life-and-death issues, we reinforce our belief that the people will make reasoned decisions, and that we are an open, democratic government.

“Jury service is a vital aspect of our government. The jury system gives equal weight to diverse voices – the system works because everyone on the jury has an equal voice regardless of who they are and what they do.

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“The success of our jury system depends on the participation of every citizen who is called to serve. That is why during Jury Appreciation Week we honor and thank 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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