

Editorial: Sullivan, Ashworth for EDC judge



Publisher's note: *Lake Tahoe News convened an editorial panel of six South Shore residents to decide on this endorsement for the June primary.*

Politics in judicial races can be troubling because those wearing the revered black robe are on the bench in what is supposed to be an impartial role. They are there to follow the law, not political biases.

Judges should not be taking out ads to support the Second Amendment. They are there to uphold the entire Constitution. Judges need a moderate perspective to handle the wide range of issues they hear. It is important that people who come before them are given their due process.

Voters in El Dorado County on June 3 will be asked to replace two retiring judges. Both slots are being contested.

Lake Tahoe News recommends voting for Dylan Sullivan to replace Daniel Proud and Vicki Ashworth to take Doug Phimister's seat.

Sullivan is essentially doing the job today of a judge in her role as a court commissioner for El Dorado County. She has had that job since fall 2011. This experience will allow her to step into the judgeship without having to endure a learning

curve.

Those who have been in her court describe Sullivan as fair, open minded, respectful, efficient with time, knowledgeable and versed in the topic before her.

Joe Hoffman is her opponent. We question his ethics, especially in how he represented himself to voters. He also lacks substance.

For all of these reasons Sullivan is unequivocally the best person for El Dorado County Superior Court Office 5.

Ashworth is a veteran in the El Dorado County District Attorney's Office. She has handled every type of criminal case there is. And while she would likely not hear criminal cases at the get-go because of potential conflicts of interest, we have no doubt she will be adept at learning the other types of legal matters that will come before her.

In such a small county the judges must be versed in all aspects of law and don't have the luxury of specializing.

Successfully prosecuting high-profile criminal cases takes research, patience, intelligence, knowledge of the law, a realization of knowing lives will be forever changed from the trial's outcome, tenacity and a drive to ferret out the details.

Ashworth embodies those traits each time she steps into the courtroom. We believe she will do the same from the other side of the bench.

She is running against Joe Weinberger and David Combellack. The bulk of Weinberger's experience is as a personal injury attorney, which we don't believe qualifies him for the complexities of being a judge. We question the reasons Combellack would wait so long in his career to attempt to be a judge. And with Judge Steve Bailey being an advisor to his

campaign and Bailey wanting to be the presiding judge, we cannot support Combella.

Without reservation we support Ashworth for Office 1 of the El Dorado County Superior Court.

When selecting the two people to endorse *Lake Tahoe News* also took into consideration the overall makeup of the court, which has branches in South Lake Tahoe, Placerville and Cameron Park. There are eight judges and one commissioner. And unfortunately a bit of politics is going on inside those hallowed halls.

We are in favor of Judge Suzanne Kingsbury remaining the presiding judge. With a belief that not only will Sullivan and Ashworth do the job well, we believe they will support Kingsbury.