



NEWS RELEASE

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Ninth Circuit Judge M. Margaret McKeown to Chair National Codes of Conduct Committee

SAN FRANCISCO – Circuit Judge M. Margaret McKeown of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit has been selected to chair the Committee on Codes of Conduct of the Judicial Conference of the United States, the national policy-making body for federal courts.

Judge McKeown, 57, was appointed committee chair by Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr., of the Supreme Court of the United States. She will serve a three-year term beginning October 1, 2008. She succeeds U.S. District Judge Gordon J. Quist of the Western District of Michigan.

Judge McKeown has served on the committee since 2001. She regularly participates in judicial and other educational programs on judicial ethics.

“I am privileged to accept this appointment from the Chief Justice. All of us who serve on the committee recognize the importance of ethics in assuring public confidence in the judiciary,” Judge McKeown said.

The Codes of Conduct Committee offers ethics advice, training and other information on the application of the Codes of Conduct for federal judges and other judicial branch employees. The committee also advises judges and employees on adherence to Titles III and VI of the Ethics Reform Act of 1989, which apply to gifts and honorariums.

Over the last year, the committee has been reviewing proposed revisions to the Code of Conduct for United States Judges. Public comment on the changes was accepted through April 18, 2008. The Code of Conduct was initially adopted by the Judicial Conference in 1973 and substantially revised in 1992. The current review is in response to changes adopted by the American Bar Association in February 2007, amending the ABA Model Code of Judicial Conduct.

Judge McKeown was appointed to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals on April 8, 1998. She maintains chambers in San Diego. Prior to coming onto the bench, she practiced law with the law firm of Perkins Coie from 1975 to 1998, and was a partner in Seattle and Washington, D.C.

Her practice focused on complex litigation, intellectual property, antitrust and trade regulation. She was a White House Fellow from 1980 to 1981, serving as special assistant to the secretary of the interior and special assistant at the White House.

Judge McKeown received a B.A. in 1972 from the University of Wyoming and her J.D. in 1975 from Georgetown University Law School. She received an honorary doctorate from Georgetown University in 2005.

In addition to her service on the Codes of Conduct Committee, Judge McKeown serves on the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit and the Ninth Circuit's Public Information and Community Outreach (PICO) committee. She is a member of the Board of Directors of the Federal Judges Association and the Advisory Board of the American Judicature Society. She chairs the ABA Standing Committee on Federal Judicial Improvements, is a member of the ABA World Justice Project Commission, and was a member of the ABA Commission for the Revision of the Model Justice Code. She is a member of the American Law Institute.

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals hears appeals of cases decided by federal trial courts in nine western states and two Pacific Island jurisdictions. The court regularly hears cases in San Francisco, Pasadena, Portland and Seattle, and also travels periodically to other cities within the circuit to hold court.

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