

**Responses of Jeffrey J. Helmick
Nominee to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio
to the Written Questions of Senator Amy Klobuchar**

- 1. If you had to describe it, how would you characterize your judicial philosophy?
How do you see the role of the judge in our constitutional system?**

Response: A judge's role is to resolve disputes between and among the parties in the way the applicable statutes, precedents, and other legal authorities require. By such adherence to the rule of law, a judge will allow every litigant to know that their case was decided under the relevant facts and in a way that precedent mandates. By treating all parties with respect, open mindedness, patience and dignity, judges ensure that no party can ever reasonably conclude that their case was decided by emotion, personal feelings, or prejudice.

- 2. What assurances can you give that litigants coming into your courtroom will be treated fairly regardless of their political beliefs or whether they are rich or poor, defendant or plaintiff?**

Response: My entire career has been as a litigator, largely at the trial level. I have represented individuals and businesses in a variety of civil matters, both in state and federal courts. I have also represented the criminally accused. As a result, I have a broad perspective on the experiences of many different types of litigants in a number of settings. I will remember those experiences should I be confirmed, and would always approach every litigant with patience, open mindedness, respect and dignity.

- 3. In your opinion, how strongly should judges bind themselves to the doctrine of stare decisis? How does the commitment to stare decisis vary depending on the court?**

Response: I believe judges must strongly adhere and be committed to the doctrine of stare decisis. Judges are obliged to adhere to precedent whether they personally agree with such precedent or not. Adherence to precedent will ensure the integrity of the judicial system and assure every litigant that their case was decided on the relevant facts and applicable law, and not on prejudice or personal feelings.