



# NEWS RELEASE

## Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts

---

December 17, 2004

Contact: Karen Redmond

### **New Chairs of Judicial Conference Budget Committee Selected**

Judge Julia Gibbons (6<sup>th</sup> Cir.) has been tapped by Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist to be the new chair of the Budget Committee of the Judicial Conference of the United States, succeeding Chief Judge John Heyburn (W.D. Ky.). Sharing committee leadership responsibilities with Judge Gibbons will be Chief Judge Sven Erik Holmes (N.D. Okla.), who was named vice-chairman by Rehnquist.

The Budget Committee consults with Judicial Conference committees to formulate and present for approval of the Conference the Judiciary's annual budget, then presents and defends to Congress the approved budget. The Committee also assists with the Judiciary's efforts to improve fiscal responsibility, accountability and efficiency in overall operations. The appointments of Judges Gibbons and Holmes began at the end of the lame duck session of the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Judges Gibbons and Holmes were members of the Budget Committee before taking on chair responsibilities. Previously legal advisor to Governor Lamar Alexander from 1979-81 and a state judge from 1981-1983, Judge Gibbons was nominated to the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Tennessee in 1983, and elevated to the Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit in 2002. She was appointed to the Judicial Conference Judicial Resources Committee in 1990, and was chair of the committee from 1994 until 1999. She also was a member of the Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation.

Judge Holmes was nominated to the Northern District of Oklahoma in 1994 and has served since 2001 on the Budget Committee. Prior to his appointment to the federal bench, he acquired extensive Hill experience staffing several key Senate committees.

Judge Gibbons succeeds Judge Heyburn who became a member of the Budget committee in 1994, and its chair in 1997. His most visible duty has been to present at annual hearings the Judiciary's budget request to Congress, although much of the Budget Committee's work is behind the scenes working with other Conference committees and Judiciary staff to assemble the Judiciary's budget, and with Congressional leadership and staff to secure funding.

"Judge Heyburn built a solid base while he chaired the Budget Committee," said Leonidas Ralph Mecham, Director of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "and the entire judicial branch owes him a debt of gratitude. I am confident that Judges Gibbons and Holmes will continue to build on his efforts, bringing their own energy, focus and leadership to the crucial task of securing adequate funding for the courts to conduct their business in today's austere budget environment."

The Judicial Conference of the United States is the principal policy-making body for the federal court system. The Chief Justice serves as the presiding officer of the Conference, which is composed of the chief judges of the 13 courts of appeals, a district judge from each of the 12 geographic circuits, and the chief judge of the Court of International Trade. The Conference meets twice a year to consider administrative and policy issues affecting the court system and to make recommendations to Congress concerning legislation involving the Judicial Branch.

###