



Agenda Date: 8/23/2005  
Agenda Placement: 3A

## NAPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Letter

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Helene Franchi for Nancy Watt - County Executive Officer  
County Executive Office  
**REPORT BY:** Helene Franchi, Management Analyst III, 253-4820  
**SUBJECT:** Proclamation regarding the retirement of The Honorable W. Scott Snowden

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

Presentation of a Proclamation to The Honorable W. Scott Snowden, Judge of the Superior Court of Napa County, in recognition of over 25 years of service.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Board of Supervisors wishes to present a Proclamation to The Honorable W. Scott Snowden, honoring him for his 25 years of service to the Napa Consolidated Court. Judge Snowden was appointed a Municipal Court Judge by Governor Brown, taking his oath of office on February 1, 1980 and succeeding Judge Philip A. Champlin who was elevated to the Superior Court. In 1984 he was elected to the Superior Court succeeding Judge Thomas Kongsgaard and has been reelected in each subsequent election.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Is there a Fiscal Impact?                      No

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: The proposed action is not a project as defined by 14 California Code of Regulations 15378 (State CEQA Guidelines) and therefore CEQA is not applicable.

### **BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION**

Judge Snowden was admitted to the California Bar February 1, 1972, engaging in private law practice as a partner in the law firm of Coombs, Dunlap, Dunlap and Champlin (now Coombs & Dunlap) from 1972 through 1980. During his tenure with the firm he served as City Attorney for the Town of Yountville (1977-80) and Deputy City Attorney for the City of Napa (1972-80).

Judge Snowden was appointed by Governor Jerry Brown on December 31, 1979 to the position of Judge of the Municipal Court where he served with distinction until January 1985. June 5, 1984 he was elected to succeed retiring Superior Court Judge Thomas Kongsgaard for the term commencing January 7, 1985 and has since been reelected without opposition in subsequent elections. Judge Snowden was assigned by the Chief Justice of California to sit as a justice on the First District Court of Appeal where he was issued numerous opinions that have had substantial impact on the jurisprudence of the State of California. During his 25 years of service to Napa County, he has presided over all case types while serving at various times as Presiding Judge of the Court, Presiding Judge of the Appellate Division of the Superior Court, Master Juvenile and Family Court Judge, Master Criminal Calendar Judge and as a trial judge in both civil and criminal divisions of the court.

Judge Snowden's leadership and expertise have also been demonstrated through:

- | Selection to the faculty of the National Judicial College in Reno, Nevada, where he annually instructed a week-long seminar on caseload management teaching judges from all over the country, and from U. S. protectorates and territories;
- | Development of Napa County Superior Court into a recognized leader in court centered alternative dispute resolution by providing training through the Straus Institute of Dispute Resolution of the Pepperdine University School of Law to all judges of the court and the establishment of a remarkably successful in-house mediation program at no cost to civil litigants; and
- | Active collaboration with Napa County Boards of Supervisors and Executive Leadership that has resulted in the renovation of the Historic Courthouse, the construction of the facility linking the historic courthouse with the Hall of Records, the construction of the Napa County Department of Corrections, the design and construction of the Criminal Court Building, and the currently evolving development of the new juvenile court facilities and the retrofitting of the historically accurate stained glass in the dome of the Historic Courthouse.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

A . WSSnowden Proclamation

CEO Recommendation: Approve

Reviewed By: Helene Franchi