

May 1, 2023

Via Hand Delivery

Governor Brad Little
700 W. Jefferson St.
Boise, ID 83702

Dear Governor Little:

I write to inform you that I have applied to be a Senior Judge and to resign my position as an Associate Justice on the Supreme Court effective October 31, 2023.

This has been a bittersweet decision. It has been the privilege of my professional career to have been a jurist in Idaho for more than the past quarter century. However, given the disparity in pay between a Supreme Court Justice (which is lower than a beginning lawyer at some Boise firms and one of the lowest in the nation) and a lawyer in private practice, I find it necessary financially to leave the public sector and return to the private sector. The job requires extraordinary hours to do it well. In sum, the state is asking judges to do too much for too little.

I heard recently that two groups of lawyers aspire to be judges: those for whom it is a pay raise; and those for whom it is a calling. I fear the Legislature is working wittingly or unwittingly to reduce the two categories to one and that those for whom it is a calling will find the pay too little to attract them to make the financial sacrifice it takes to become a judge. I hope the legislature can learn how short-sighted this approach is.

My hope is that I have given the Judicial Council and you enough time to secure a replacement for me so that the transition will be as seamless as possible.

Best personal regards,



John R. Stegner
Associate Justice

JRS/tjn

pc: Chief Justice G. Richard Bévan