



KAY R. HAGAN

UNITED STATES SENATOR - NORTH CAROLINA

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## HAGAN NAMES MEMBERS OF STATEWIDE PANEL TO SCREEN CANDIDATES FOR KEY FEDERAL APPOINTMENTS

*Group will report to Hagan, who will, in turn, make  
recommendations to White House*

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**WASHINGTON, D.C.** –Committed to ensuring that the most qualified applicants are selected for the federal judiciary and that the state’s best interests are represented there, U.S. Senator Kay R. Hagan (D-NC) today named the four members of a statewide panel established to screen candidates for appointments to key federal positions. The panel will report their recommendations to Senator Hagan, who will, in turn, make recommendations to the White House for United States Attorneys and Federal District Court Judgeships.

Additionally, Senator Hagan has pledged to work to ensure that North Carolina receives appropriate representation on the 4<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals, a key priority for Senator Hagan. This committee will also screen candidates for available positions on the 4<sup>th</sup> Circuit.

The committee will consist of four members in total: one member each from the eastern, western and central regions of North Carolina, and one statewide chairman.

Former NC Supreme Court Chief Justice **Burley Mitchell** will serve as the panel’s chairman. He will be joined by **Janice McKenzie Cole** from the east, **Locke Clifford** from central North Carolina and **Anthony di Santi** from the west.

“I am so honored these four tremendously skilled legal minds have agreed to help me find the most qualified candidates for North Carolina’s federal appointments,” Hagan said. “I have brought together some of North Carolina’s best and brightest, each of whom offers a diverse range of legal expertise, to help me recommend federal nominees that all North Carolinians,

regardless of their political affiliation, will be proud of. I value the opinions of these four committee members and I look forward to receiving their input on decisions that are of such extreme importance when it comes to keeping North Carolina safe and making sure our state's interests are fully represented in the federal judiciary.”

Burley Mitchell is a graduate of NC State University and the University of North Carolina School of Law. A veteran of the US Navy, Mitchell served as an associate justice of the NC Supreme Court from 1984 until 1994, when he was appointed Chief Justice by Governor Jim Hunt. He held that role until 1999, when he retired from the bench and joined the firm of Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice in its Raleigh office. He is currently on the Board of Trustees for NC State University.

Janice McKenzie Cole is a former U.S. Attorney for North Carolina's eastern district. Appointed by President Clinton in 1994, Cole was the first African-American female U.S. Attorney in North Carolina history. Prior to that, Cole served as a District Court judge, in the First District. She was also an Assistant U.S. Attorney in New York before moving to North Carolina. Cole graduated from John Jay College of Criminal Justice and Fordham Law School. She currently chairs the State Bar Client Security Fund Board and serves on the Bar Association's Administration of Justice Task Force.

Locke Clifford first established his law practice in Greensboro in 1973, and is a graduate of the University of North Carolina and its School of Law. A Board Certified Specialist in Criminal Law, Clifford has been active in the Greensboro and North Carolina Bar Associations for more than 40 years, and is a member of the North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission. He has been listed in BestLawyers in America for 20 years and is a fellow in both the American College of Trial Lawyers and the American Board of Criminal Lawyers.

Anthony di Santi, Vice-President of the North Carolina State Bar, is a founding partner at di Santi, Watson, Capua & Wilson, one of Boone's oldest law firms. A Hendersonville native, di Santi graduated from the University of North Carolina and Wake Forest School of Law, where di Santi wrote for the Wake Forest Law Review. di Santi served as an adjunct professor at Appalachian State University for six years. He is a recipient of the Silver Star and Purple Heart medals for his service in the US Army during the Vietnam War.

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