



## Questions for Candidates for Court of Appeals Conservative Coalition of Harris County

*This questionnaire will be posted onto the Conservative Coalition of Harris County website for public voter viewing.*

Candidate Name	Position for which Candidate is Running
James Lombardino	1 <sup>st</sup> Court of Appeals, Place 5

*Please give your answer to each of the following questions and please include your rationale with each answer. Please be concise and clear.*

1. 

1.	Please describe the qualifications and experience that make you the best candidate for the office for which you are running.
	<b>Answer:</b> I am a former assistant district attorney for Harris County. Thereafter, I was a partner in a Houston law firm specializing in litigation in both state and federal courts. I have tried numerous jury and non-jury cases in both state and federal court. Until December 31, 2018, I served as the presiding judge for the 308 <sup>th</sup> District Court in Harris County, Texas. I am the best candidate for the 1 <sup>st</sup> Court of Appeals because it handles civil, criminal and family law appeals and I have extensive experience both as a lawyer and as a judge in all these areas of law.
  
2. 

2.	Please describe what you believe are the most significant issues in this race and why.
	<b>Answer:</b> The court of appeals has not had a justice with extensive family law experience since Eva Guzman was elected to the Texas Supreme Court in 2009. The court of appeals needs an experienced family law judge on it because the lower trial courts can take your children, your property and your freedom. They also handle cases brought by Child Protective Service (CPS) when it seeks to remove children from their family and place them with a foster family. The children in these cases deserve an immediate review of a court's order to ensure that their placement is in their best interests.
  
3. 

3.	Which Supreme Court Justice most closely represents your judicial philosophy? Please explain why.
	<b>Answer:</b> Clarence Thomas. I admire him due to the obstacles and road blocks he had to Overcome; and, he is a strong advocate of personal responsibility.
  
4. 

4.	List the state(s) in which you are or have been licensed to practice law, and the date(s) you received such licenses.
	<b>Answer:</b> I am licensed in all Texas state courts, the Federal District Courts for the Southern District of Texas and the US Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals which hears appeals originating in the Fifth Circuit which includes the state of Texas.

5. List the state or federal court(s) in which you are or have been licensed to practice, and the date(s) you received such licenses.  
**Answer:** I am licensed in all Texas state courts, the Federal District Courts for the Southern District of Texas and the US Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals which hears appeals originating in the State of Texas. Licensed in 1980.
6. Are your licenses in “good standing” in each state and federal jurisdiction in which you have been licensed; why or why not?  
**Answer:** Yes.
7. Please list the undergraduate colleges or universities, law schools and any other graduate schools that you attended, the years you attended, the degrees you received and the years of any and all graduations.  
**Answer:** I received a BBA degree in Economics from the University of Houston and my JD from the South Texas College of Law, Houston in 1976.
8. What carries the greatest influence in your rulings: civil and criminal case law, the Constitution, state statutes, or other?  
**Answer:** The greatest influence in rulings in criminal law is the Texas Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure. In family law, it is the Texas Family Code. In civil law, it is the various statutes and the Texas Code of Civil Procedure. These rulings are all made subject to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights which are intended to limit the government’s power and to protect individual rights.
9. Please identify what changes can be made to the court of appeals system to make it more efficient from your point of view.  
**Answer:** The highest priority should be given to appeals involving a parent’s right to possession of their children and in cases where the State has removed children from their family. These cases should be heard within weeks, not months or years.
10. What has been your greatest accomplishment in your legal career? In your personal life?  
**Answer:** Being elected and serving as the presiding judge for the 308<sup>th</sup> District Court in Harris County, Texas.
11. Please explain why you do, or do not, support applying term limits to Court of Appeals Justices.  
**Answer:** I do not favor applying arbitrary term limits. This is the province of the voter at the ballot box. Although, we may know some justices that we would like to replace, it would also cause justices like Nathan Hecht, Eva Guzman and Ken Wise to be removed.

12. Do you believe that voluntary professional and community service is a necessary commitment for persons holding public office? What forms of voluntary professional and community service have you been involved with in the past? Currently?
- Answer:** Community service should be encouraged but should not be necessary to hold public office. Some public office duties are time intensive and some are not. Further, every office holder has different personal situations. Some have young children; some may have handicapped or elderly family members to take care of. Some may teach or take on extra duties related to the court system. I am currently involved in several civic clubs, I am the past president of the Downtown Exchange Club, the Ecuadorian-American Chamber of Commerce and a board member of the Annunciation Greek Orthodox School. I am also a founding member of Houston Crime Stoppers. At this time, I am mentoring young litigation lawyers and I am mentoring some people who want to run for public office.
13. What do you think are the most important aspects of the Court of Appeals that voters should be aware of?
- Answer:** That 90% of appeals end at the Court of Appeals, which means that their decisions are final. Very few cases go to the Supreme Court. Therefore, it is imperative to have justices who are experienced and knowledgeable in the law. The appeals courts are the ones who correct errors and insure fairness and equal justice at the trial court level.
14. Do you have judicial experience? To what extent have you practiced in the area of Civil or Criminal law?
- Answer:** Yes. I served as the elected judge of the 308<sup>th</sup> District Court in Harris County from 2010-2018. I have extensive litigation experience in both civil and criminal law. I am a former Assistant District Attorney for Harris county and I was a litigation partner in a Houston law firm for many years. I have tried hundreds of jury and non-jury cases in both state and federal courts.
15. What ideas do you have to improve the efficiency of the appeals court to reduce case backlog?
- Answer:** To be diligent in my duties and to handle every case assigned to me in a just and fair manner. I intend to fast track any case that concerns parental visitation or parental rights and duties; and, any case involving the removal of a child from its family. Justice delayed is justice denied.

BY RETURNING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE, THE CANDIDATE ASSUMES FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL ANSWERS TO THIS QUESTIONNAIRE. THE ANSWERS ON THE FOREGOING REFLECT THE CANDIDATE'S BEST EFFORTS TO ANSWER THIS QUESTIONNAIRE HONESTLY AND DIRECTLY.

PLEASE SAVE YOUR COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE TO YOUR LOCAL MACHINE IN THE EVENT THAT THERE ARE ANY TECHNICAL PROBLEMS WHEN YOU ATTEMPT TO EMAIL IT BACK.

Once this questionnaire has been completed, please email it to:

[alex@cchc-pac.org](mailto:alex@cchc-pac.org)

\* **Please note:** You **must** return your questionnaire from the email address to which it was sent. Questionnaires returned from any other email address will be considered fraudulent and will **not** be recorded and no answers will be published in the voter's guide. CCHC-PAC deems a return from the proper email address as authentication of the correct respondent.