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SPECIAL SESSION OF THE SUPERIOR COURT  
OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE  
IN AND FOR SUSSEX COUNTY

IN THE MATTER OF: )  
Ceremony of Investiture ) Monday, September 26, 1994  
of ) Courtroom No. 1  
HON. ALICIA B. HOWARD ) Sussex County Courthouse  
Georgetown, Delaware  
as a Commission of the ) 3:00 o'clock p.m.  
Superior Court )

PRESIDING: HON. WILLIAM SWAIN LEE, ASSOCIATE JUDGE  
SUPERIOR COURT OF DELAWARE

PRESENT: HON. WILLIAM B. CHANDLER, VICE-CHANCELLOR  
CHANCERY COURT OF DELAWARE

HON. T. HENLEY GRAVES, ASSOCIATE JUDGE  
SUPERIOR COURT OF DELAWARE

HON. PATRICIA W. GRIFFIN, CHIEF MAGISTRATE  
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT

AND OTHERS.

P R O C E E D I N G S

1  
2 (Whereupon, the Court convened a special  
3 session of Superior Court at 3:00 o'clock p.m.)

4 JUDGE LEE: Actually, I tried to ask Alicia  
5 exactly how we were going to handle this today, and  
6 since my secretary, Karen Taylor, isn't here, nobody is  
7 exactly sure how this is going to turn out.

8 This is a great and happy day for Judge  
9 Graves and I. Alicia has spent the last -- what? Five  
10 years?

11 THE CLERK: Six.

12 JUDGE LEE: Six years trying to make Judge  
13 Graves and I look very intelligent in our published  
14 opinions. She has been a source of strength and a real  
15 workhorse in an area that is always sort of  
16 transitional.

17 Most Judges in the State of Delaware have law  
18 clerks that come for a year and leave, and the standard  
19 procedure -- and, Patty, I don't want you to pay any  
20 attention to this -- is that it takes them about three  
21 months to know what they are doing and the last three  
22 months they are planning on where they go next to work.  
23 So there is always the problem of having people who are

1 here for a year, but are only productive for six  
2 months.

3 Judge Chandler -- I call him by his  
4 legitimate title. Vice Chancellor, I don't know what  
5 that really means, but back when he used to work, he  
6 was known as Judge Chandler -- is largely responsible.  
7 We hired Alicia part-time, and then she became so  
8 indispensable, we lured her away from her children to  
9 have her work full-time with us.

10 So this investiture today marks a maturation  
11 for Alicia. But for us, it gives us continuity to  
12 something that's been a very precious asset to the  
13 Superior Court. When the concept of Commissioners was  
14 first raised, we were thrilled because we thought that  
15 Alicia was qualified and that this was a way that we  
16 might be able to keep her a little longer, since we  
17 knew that she was out-growing her present responsi-  
18 bilities. Judge Graves was very active in lobbying for  
19 the position.

20 We sit here today with Representative West,  
21 who picked up the ball on this for us and attempted to  
22 get it passed last year; Senator Adams and Senator  
23 Voshell, who were very instrumental in having the bill

1 passed and were instrumental, the latter two, in the  
2 confirmation proceedings. I know that Alicia went up  
3 with some trepidation to face Senator Adams and the  
4 Executive Committee and was made to feel right at home.

5 So it is important to understand that a lot  
6 of people were involved in the creation of this  
7 position, and those of us in Sussex County felt it was  
8 created with Alicia Howard in mind. At least, she was  
9 in our mind.

10 The President Judge was unable to be here  
11 today. Judge Ridgely is in a trial and called down and  
12 was very upset about not being here, because this marks  
13 a unique milestone for Superior Court. Although the  
14 Family Court has had Commissioners in the past, Alicia  
15 today becomes the first Commissioner in the Superior  
16 Court, and, indeed, her jurisdiction is even greater  
17 than that, because she will be serving two courts. She  
18 will be serving in the Court of Common Pleas, as well  
19 as the Superior Court, and that makes this position  
20 extremely unique within our judicial system.

21 I don't know what else I can say, except I  
22 can remember being very happy with the Democratic  
23 Governor on the day that this announcement came down,

EILEEN G. KIMMEL  
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

1 and that hasn't always been true for me. And I think a  
 2 word ought to go out to Governor Carper, who was not  
 3 only for the establishment of the Commissioners and one  
 4 for each county, but who also gave deference to the  
 5 recommendations of the Superior Court Judges, who  
 6 conducted interviews over a number of very qualified  
 7 people. It is only fitting, though, that Alicia  
 8 becomes the first at this time.

9 At this time, we will administer the oath of  
 10 office and solicit the help of the two younger Howards.

11 Please put your right hand on the Bible and  
 12 repeat after me.

13 I, Alicia B. Howard. . .

14 MRS. HOWARD: I, Alicia B. Howard. . .

15 JUDGE LEE: . . .do proudly swear. . .

16 MRS. HOWARD: . . .do proudly swear. . .

17 JUDGE LEE: . . .to carry out the responsi-  
 18 bilities. . .

19 MRS. HOWARD: . . .to carry out the  
 20 responsibilities. . .

21 JUDGE LEE: . . .of the Office of the  
 22 Commissioner of Superior Court. . .

23 MRS. HOWARD: . . .of the Office of the

1 Commissioner of Superior Court. . .

2 JUDGE LEE: . . .to the best of my  
3 ability. . .

4 MRS. HOWARD: . . .to the best of my  
5 ability. . .

6 JUDGE LEE: . . .freely acknowledging. . .

7 MRS. HOWARD: . . .freely acknowledging. . .

8 JUDGE LEE: . . .that the powers of this  
9 Office. . .

10 MRS. HOWARD: . . .that the powers of this  
11 Office. . .

12 JUDGE LEE: . . .flow from the people. . .

13 MRS. HOWARD: . . .flow from the people. . .

14 JUDGE LEE: . . .I am privileged to  
15 represent.

16 MRS. HOWARD: . . .I am privileged to  
17 represent.

18 JUDGE LEE: I further swear. . .

19 MRS. HOWARD: I further swear. . .

20 JUDGE LEE: . . .always to place the public  
21 interest. . .

22 MRS. HOWARD: . . .always to place the public  
23 interest. . .

1 JUDGE LEE: . . .above any special or  
2 personal interest. . .

3 MRS. HOWARD: . . .above any special or  
4 personal interest. . .

5 JUDGE LEE: . . .and to respect. . .

6 MRS. HOWARD: . . .and to respect. . .

7 JUDGE LEE: . . .the right of future  
8 generations. . .

9 MRS. HOWARD: . . .the right of future  
10 generations. . .

11 JUDGE LEE: . . .to share. . .

12 MRS. HOWARD: . . .to share. . .

13 JUDGE LEE: . . .the rich historic. . .

14 MRS. HOWARD: . . .the rich historic. . .

15 JUDGE LEE: . . .and natural heritage of  
16 Delaware.

17 MRS. HOWARD: . . .and natural heritage of  
18 Delaware.

19 JUDGE LEE: In doing so. . .

20 MRS. HOWARD: In doing so. . .

21 JUDGE LEE: . . .I will always uphold. . .

22 MRS. HOWARD: . . .I will always uphold. . .

23 JUDGE LEE: . . .and defend. . .

1 MRS. HOWARD: . . .and defend. . .

2 JUDGE LEE: . . .the Constitutions of my  
3 country and my state. . .

4 MRS. HOWARD: . . .the Constitutions of my  
5 country and my state. . .

6 JUDGE LEE: . . .so help me God.

7 MRS. HOWARD: . . .so help me God.

8 JUDGE LEE: Eric, would you do the honors? I  
9 am not sure how this is for a lawyer to invest his wife  
10 in judicial office.

11 (Thereupon, Commissioner Howard was robed  
12 by her husband, Eric Howard, Esq.)

13 JUDGE LEE: Turn around and get in the  
14 picture.

15 If you'll take the bench, I'll follow you.

16 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: I want to thank  
17 everyone for coming today to share this special  
18 occasion with me and my family. I especially want to  
19 thank Judge Lee, Judge Graves, Judge Ellis, who  
20 couldn't be here, the Senators, and the Representatives  
21 for making this day possible.

22 I'm thrilled to be the Commissioner of  
23 Superior Court of Sussex County. Most of the reason

1 I'm thrilled is because I can work with the greatest  
2 people in the world, the Superior Court employees. I  
3 am also looking forward to working with the Court of  
4 Common Pleas employees, and the attorneys, and the  
5 members of the Bar.

6 I think it is going to be an exciting job,  
7 and my goal as the Commissioner is to help make  
8 everybody's life easier, from the Judges to the court  
9 employees, to the attorneys, and the litigants, and I  
10 want to thank everybody for coming. I invite you  
11 afterwards to come to a reception and celebrate with us  
12 in the law library at the end of the ceremony.

13 Thank you.

14 (Whereupon, the Court adjourned the special  
15 session of Superior Court at 3:12 o'clock p.m.)

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