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**Governor Baker Nominates Associate Justice Paul H. Smyth and Attorney Christopher P. Hodgens as Associate Justices of the Appeals Court**

**BOSTON** – Today, Governor Charlie Baker nominated Associate Justice Paul H. Smyth and Attorney Christopher P. Hodgens as Associate Justices of the Appeals Court.

“Associate Justice Smyth and Attorney Hodgens will bring valuable knowledge and experience to their new roles if confirmed,” **said Governor Charlie Baker**. “We are proud to submit their nominations for consideration.”

“These nominees have years of experience in public service that make each of them well-suited candidates for these new positions,” **said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito**. “We look forward to the Governor’s Council’s advice and consent.”

The Appeals Court is the Commonwealth's intermediate appellate court. The Appeals Court is a court of general appellate jurisdiction, which means that the justices review decisions that the trial judges from the several Departments of the Trial Court have already made in many different kinds of cases. The Appeals Court also has jurisdiction over appeals from final decisions of three State agencies: the Appellate Tax Board, the Industrial Accident Board and the Commonwealth Employment Relations Board. The Appeals Court consists of a chief justice and twenty-four associate justices.

For more information about the Appeals Court, visit their [homepage](#).

Judicial nominations are subject to the advice and consent of the Governor's Council. Applicants for judicial openings are reviewed by the Judicial Nominating Commission (JNC) and recommended to the governor. Governor Baker established the JNC in February 2015 pursuant to Executive Order 558, a non-partisan, non-political Commission composed of volunteers from a cross-section of the Commonwealth's diverse population to screen judicial applications. Twenty-one members were later appointed to the JNC in April 2015.

### **About Paul H. Smyth**

Paul H. Smyth began his legal career as an Assistant District Attorney for the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office in 1997. He then joined the U.S. Attorney's Office in 2003 as an Assistant U.S. Attorney before becoming Chief of the Springfield Branch Office in 2007. Since 2015, he has served as Associate Justice on the Massachusetts Trial Court, acting as First Justice of the Pittsfield District Court and the presiding judge for the Berkshire County Drug Court. Associate Justice Smyth is actively involved in his community, coaching both of his children's sports teams, since 2014, has participated annually in the Pan-Mass Cycling Challenge. After graduating from college, Associate Justice Smyth also served as a member of the Peace Corps volunteer in the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Associate Justice Smyth received his bachelor's degree from Amherst College in 1990 and his juris doctor from the University of Virginia School of Law in 1996.

### **About Christopher P. Hodgens**

Christopher P. Hodgens began his legal career in 1990 as a law clerk for the Milford District Court, and later, for the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Since 1995, he has served as an Assistant District Attorney in the Worcester County District Attorney's Office, where he has held various roles, including Appeals Division Chief and Litigation Integrity Division Chief. Attorney Hodgens currently serves as a member of the Worcester County Bar Association and the Massachusetts Bar Association. In his community, Attorney Hodgens is a member of the Hopedale Zoning Board of Appeals and previously served as a member of the Hopedale Regional School District Planning Committee from 2010 to 2011. Additionally, he acted as a moderator for Sacred Heart Parish from 2016 until 2018 and, for many years, as a coach for several Hopedale youth sports teams. Attorney Hodgens received his bachelor's degree from the College of the Holy Cross in 1989 and his juris doctor from New England School of Law in 1992.

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