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The Next Generation of Potential Judges Is Losing Interest in State Supreme Courts. Here's Why

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Justice Harold Melton

Justice Harold Melton, a partner in Troutman Pepper's Business Litigation Practice Group, was quoted in the July 29, 2024 *Law.com* article, "[The Next Generation of Potential Judges Is Losing Interest in State Supreme Courts. Here's Why](#)."

Harold Melton, who resigned as chief justice of the Georgia Supreme Court in 2021 and is now a partner at Troutman Pepper Hamilton Sanders, said within roughly the last 20 years, those responsible for appointing judges began seeking out younger candidates with the idea that they'd stay with the court longer.

While historically joining a Supreme Court was seen almost exclusively as the culminating role at the tail end of a legal career and the step before retirement, Melton said that hasn't been the case with younger judges, who often opt to leave the bench well before retirement to pursue more lucrative job opportunities.

"The reality is once you have judges who join the bench at 36, 37, 38, there's obviously a compromise in pay," Melton said. "There's a discount that they are giving the state in taking those roles. It works just fine, kind of, up until the time they might have kids that go to college. That's where we've started seeing judges break away."

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