

NEWS RELEASE

ARIZONA SUPREME COURT

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

Contact: Heather Murphy
Telephone: (602) 452-3656
Cell: (602) 448-8412
hmurphy@courts.az.gov

January 26, 2018

Robert Brutinel Elected as Supreme Court's Vice Chief Justice

PHOENIX – Arizona's Supreme Court elected a new Vice Chief Justice Wednesday. Justice Robert Brutinel will take over as Vice Chief Justice from John Pelander.

Vice Chief Justice Pelander recently announced that he was stepping down as Vice Chief Justice. Pelander plans to continue serving on the Arizona Supreme Court but said that if he succeeded Scott Bales to become Chief Justice in 2019, he would face retirement before completing a full five-year term as Chief Justice.

Chief Justice Bales said that "Justice Pelander is an outstanding colleague and the Court greatly appreciates his service as Vice Chief Justice. Arizona is fortunate that the Court will continue to benefit from his experience and wisdom on the Court." Echoing these comments, Vice Chief Justice Brutinel said "I look forward to working with my fellow Justices to prepare a 2019-24 strategic agenda for the judiciary that builds upon the Court's progress under Chief Justice Bales and I am excited to work with the many outstanding people who serve our courts throughout Arizona."

While serving as Vice Chief Justice, Pelander was instrumental in the creation of [Our Courts Arizona](#), an interactive adult civics program presented by Arizona judges.

Biographies

Vice Chief Justice Robert Brutinel was appointed to the Arizona Supreme Court in 2010, becoming Vice Chief Justice in January 2018. Before his appointment, he served as a superior court judge and as the Presiding Judge in Yavapai County. He graduated from Arizona State

University with a degree in Economics, and received his law degree from the University of Arizona's, James E. Rogers College of Law. He has served on the Arizona Supreme Court Committee on Juvenile Courts, the Arizona Commission on Judicial Conduct, the Arizona Supreme Court Commission on Technology, Arizona Judicial Council, the Arizona Character Education Commission, and the Governor's Children's Cabinet. Justice Brutinel is a past president of the Arizona Judges Association and the Yavapai County Bar Association. In 2010 he was named the National Court Appointed Special Advocates' (CASA) Judge of the Year.

Justice John Pelander was appointed to the Arizona Supreme Court in 2009 and served as Vice Chief Justice from July 2014 to January 2018. Before his appointment, he was a judge with Division Two of the Arizona Court of Appeals for fourteen years, and served as its chief judge from 2004-2009. He received his J.D. degree from the University of Arizona, and his Master of Laws in Judicial Process from the University of Virginia. Before joining the bench, Justice Pelander was in private practice for eighteen years and was a certified specialist in the field of personal injury and wrongful death. He was also an associate with the American Board of Trial Advocates. He has taught at numerous state and county bar association programs and served as a faculty member of the Arizona College of Trial Advocacy. Justice Pelander also has served on the Arizona Commission for Judicial Performance Review and the Arizona Judicial Council, and he previously chaired the Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee.

###

For more information about the courts in Arizona, go to www.AZCourts.gov, follow us on [Twitter](#) or visit our [Facebook](#) page. For free legal resources, webinars, a glossary of common terms, and more, visit www.AZCourtHelp.org.