

OFFICE OF GOV. BILL RITTER, JR.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THURSDAY, MAY 1, 2008

CONTACT

Evan Dreyer, 720.350.8370, evan.dreyer@state.co.us

GOV. RITTER NAMES THREE NEW JUDGES IN 17th JD

Gov. Bill Ritter today appointed two new judges to the District Court bench and one judge to the County Court bench in the 17th Judicial District. The 17th Judicial District serves Adams and Broomfield counties.

The District Court appointees are Patrick T. Murphy of Broomfield and Jill-Elyn Straus of Thornton, and the Adams County Court appointee is Byron Lynn Howell of Brighton.

Murphy is currently in private practice with Purvis, Gray and Murphy, a position he has held since 2004. Prior to starting this firm, he was in private practice from 1986 to 2003. From 1981 to 1986 he was an assistant United States attorney. He also has served in the Weld County and Boulder County District Attorney Offices. He received his bachelor's degree in 1972 and his law degree in 1975, both from the University of Colorado at Boulder.

Straus is currently a prosecutor in the District Attorney's Office in the 17th Judicial District, a position she has held since 1983. She is a chief trial deputy and specializes in cases with juvenile victims. She previously has worked for a continuing legal education firm. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois in 1978 and her law degree from the University of Denver in 1982.

Howell is currently a deputy city and county attorney in Broomfield, a position he has held since 2001. He has previously served as an assistant Washington County attorney, an assistant Morgan County attorney and the supervisor of the Pre-Trial Services Unit in San Diego Superior Court. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Northern Colorado in 1978, his J.D. from the University of Wyoming in 1994 and his M.P.A. from San Diego State University in 2003.

All three appointments take effect July 1. The positions were created pursuant to House Bill 07-1054. The appointments are for a provisional term of two years, and then until the second Tuesday in January following the next general election. Thereafter, if retained by the voters, the term is for six years. The current salary for a District Court judge is \$118,972 and \$113,856 for a County Court judge.