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ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE of PENNSYLVANIA COURTS

## MEDIA ADVISORY

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### **Statement of the Chief Justice of Pennsylvania In Recognition of Juror Appreciation Week**

**HARRISBURG, May 18, 2010** - Chief Justice Ronald D. Castille today issued a statement in appreciation of citizens who have served on juries throughout the Commonwealth during the past year.

This week, May 17-21, has been designated "Juror Appreciation Week" by the Pennsylvania Senate.

In praising those who have performed public service as jurors, Chief Justice Castille said in his statement:

"One of the most fundamental rights of the American people is the right to a jury trial in criminal and civil cases. To ensure that right, the people themselves must be willing to play a vital role in the justice system. They must occasionally be willing to set aside personal business and respond to the call to serve.

"Historically, the American colonists wrested the power of trial by jury from the king of England by revolution, that right having been denied them through bitterly hated British laws known as the Navigation Acts. The Declaration of Independence denounced the king 'for depriving us in many cases of the benefits of trial by jury.'

"Following the American Revolution, the people of this new nation asserted their right to be free and self-governing. The right to a jury trial was written into Article Three of the Constitution in 1787. The same right was reasserted in the Bill of Rights in the Sixth and Seventh Amendments in 1791.

"Those rights are built into our history and remain an important part of our heritage. That is why this week we honor those Pennsylvania citizens who, by personal sacrifice, served as jurors during the past year and have kept faith with the founders of our nation and helped to keep the principles of Democracy alive. We encourage all citizens to do the same."

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