



YORK COUNTY ATTORNEY

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November 19, 2025

**Judicial Resources Commission
Honorable Jonathan Papik
State Capitol Building
PO Box 98910
Lincoln, NE 68509**

Re: Judicial Vacancy in 5th Judicial District – County Court

Dear Justice Papik and Members of the Commission:

I am writing in support of this Commission declaring a judicial vacancy in the Fifth Judicial District due to Judge C. Jo Peterson's retirement. Declaring a judicial vacancy on the County Court will help maintain the number of judges allocated by the Nebraska Legislature and ensure that the County Court continues to administer cases in a timely manner.

As for York County, all of our case counts have exploded in the past three years. This year, we are looking at roughly a doubling of juvenile court filings, and percentage increases across the board. Specifically, I track 4 case types. County court filings, which is all criminal filings, felony and misdemeanor; District Bindovers, which is felonies not resolved in County Court, Traffic filings, and Juvenile case filings. Year over year, we are looking at increases as follows:

- District Bindovers: **24.6% increase from 2024 to 2025**
- County Court Criminal Filings: **28.4% increase from 2024 to 2025**
- Traffic Filings: **22.7% increase from 2024 to 2025**
- Juvenile filings: **91.6% increase from 2024 to 2025**

These projections are accurate as of October 24, 2025, which is the last date in which I tracked these numbers. These numbers also do not account for adult diversion cases, nor for juvenile diversion cases. I am also the County Attorney in Polk County, also in the 5th Judicial District, which is experiencing similar percentage increases, albeit on a smaller total number of cases.

This is relevant because these cases are all handled by judges in the 5th Judicial District. In the event that the vacancy is not declared, or the vacancy is transferred to another judicial district, our already skinny resources will be stretched even further, as the Judges that handle cases in Polk and York would be required to also handle cases for two additional counties that previously Judge Peterson handled.

Ultimately, I am requesting that this Commission declare a vacancy at this time. I urge you to do so.

Very Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Johnson", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Christopher M. Johnson
Polk County Attorney, and
Chief Deputy York County Attorney