



Voters approve state judges

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) -- Voters have approved Gov. Phil Bredesen's appointments of two Tennessee Supreme Court justices and five appeals court judges.

With over 70 percent of precincts reporting, the judges had enough votes to be retained.

Since 1994, only one judge has not been retained in the yes-no elections for the state's top judges. This year, there is no organized campaign against any of the judges on the ballot.

The two Supreme Court justices on Thursday's ballot were William C. Koch and Gary R. Wade.

In the Court of Appeals, the judges up for retention are Andy D. Bennett, 51, chief deputy attorney general until appointed last September; Richard H. Dinkins, 55, a chancellor in Nashville until appointed in January; and Steve Stafford, 52, a Dyer County chancellor until his appointment last month.

In the Court of Criminal Appeals, the judges are Camille R. McMullen, 37, an assistant U.S. attorney in West Tennessee until appointed last month, and D. Kelly Thomas Jr., 56, who previously served as a Circuit Court judge in Blount County.