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**Superior Court Judge Margaret R. Hinkle Named Administrative Justice
of the Business Litigation Session**

Chief Justice Barbara J. Rouse today announced that Judge Margaret R. Hinkle will succeed Judge Ralph Gants as the Administrative Justice of the Business Litigation Session (BLS) of the Superior Court. Judge Gants was appointed to the Supreme Judicial Court by Governor Deval Patrick, and his appointment was confirmed this week by the Governor's Council.

Chief Justice Rouse also announced that Judge Judith Fabricant and Judge Stephen Neel will continue to share BLS 2, a second session, alternating six months in the BLS and six months in criminal sessions - a balance they currently enjoy.

"Judge Hinkle brings to the Business Litigation Session the combined qualities of intellect, experience, judgment, and work ethic that have been the hallmark of judges who have served in the BLS. I am very pleased that one of our most talented and respected judges will succeed Judge Gants and continue the same standards of excellence that have earned the Business Litigation Session a national reputation as a preferred forum for resolving commercial disputes," said Chief Justice Rouse.

Judge Hinkle was appointed to the Superior Court in 1993 by Governor William F. Weld. Previously, Judge Hinkle had been a partner of the Boston law firm of Goodwin, Procter & Hoar, now known as Goodwin Procter LLP. There she worked closely with Hon. Allan van Gestel (ret.), first judge of the Business Litigation Session. Before her appointment, Judge Hinkle had also been an associate of the Boston firm of Berman, Dittmar & Engel, a spin-off of Goodwin Procter. While in private practice, Judge Hinkle concentrated on securities and commercial litigation.

Before her judicial appointment, Judge Hinkle had also been an Assistant United States Attorney in Boston in the Economic Crimes division. During her tenure there, then U.S. Attorney Wayne A. Budd nominated Judge Hinkle for the U.S. Department of Justice John Marshall Award for her work in the area of financial institution fraud. Before joining the Superior Court, Judge Hinkle also served as the Head of the Justice Department's New England Bank Fraud Task Force.

Following her graduation from Boston College Law School, Judge Hinkle served as a law clerk for the Hon. Andrew A. Caffrey, then the Chief Judge of the United States District Court in

Boston.

Retired Superior Court Judge Allan van Gestel, who served as the first BLS Administrative Justice, said, “Judge Hinkle and I have had a long professional relationship, having practiced law together and having served as judges on the Superior Court for 11 years. The BLS entails a sound knowledge and love of the law; an excellent ability to write with clarity and precision; a penchant for organization; an appreciation of the lawyers’ roles and burdens; and most of all, a tremendous work ethic. That is Judge Hinkle. She will make a great leader of the session, and I commend Chief Justice Rouse for her designation.”

Established in 2000, the Business Litigation Session provides a statewide forum for the resolution of business litigation and commercial disputes. It is recognized both locally and nationally as a forum to resolve business disputes efficiently and with decisions of the highest quality. In order to address the complex mix of litigation expeditiously, the Superior Court will continue to need adequate resources and funding to support both civil sessions.

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