

Amy R. Cafardi, Esquire
511 Treeline Drive
Gibsonia, PA 15044
Telephone: (412) 491-9747
Email: Cafardi@zoominternet.net

March 25, 2009

I served Allegheny County as an Assistant District Attorney from 2003 to 2008. During that time, I had the honor of being assigned to Judge Opiela's district for approximately one year. This assignment meant that I would appear at Judge Opiela's office one day per week to prosecute cases at the preliminary hearing level with Judge Opiela presiding as the judicial authority at these hearings.

It was my experience that Judge Opiela was always extremely fair and thorough in his duties as a Magisterial District Judge. Judge Opiela approached every case with great integrity and his judicial demeanor was always above reproach. Not only did he render thoughtful and educated decisions with regard to the preliminary hearings that he presided over, but Judge Opiela also followed through on any negotiated plea bargain that was reached prior to a preliminary hearing. Judge Opiela instituted a unique "review process" that provided a hands-on review of a criminal case that was plead down to a lesser summary offense. He would require the defendant to return to his office on a scheduled date to prove that he or she had complied with all aspects of the negotiated plea, including paying fines and costs to the court. By doing this, Judge Opiela made sure that the defendant did everything that was required in order to receive the benefit of the plea bargain and he also made sure that the State of Pennsylvania received the appropriate court costs and fines. Many offices that I was assigned to did not have such a well organized review process. This resulted in cases falling through the cracks, defendants getting away with not doing what they were supposed to do to receive the benefit of a plea bargain, and monies not being collected efficiently to cover fines and costs.

I believe that Judge Opiela has done a wonderful job as Magisterial District Judge. Through instituting an organized review process and through being a fair, educated, and experienced judge he has made a significant positive impact on his community. It is with great honor that I give him my endorsement as he seeks re-election.

Sincerely,



Amy R. Cafardi,
Attorney at Law