

For Immediate Release

Reappointment of the Honorable Chief Magistrate Judge Jon Stuart Scoles

The United States District Court for the Northern District of Iowa is pleased to announce that the Honorable Chief Magistrate Judge Jon Stuart Scoles has been reappointed for a second eight-year term to start March 20, 2015. In accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 631 and the Regulations of the Judicial Conference of the United States Establishing Standards and Procedures for the Appointment and Reappointment of United States Magistrate Judges, the district court published a public notice and appointed a Merit Selection Panel to assess his performance and consider comments from members of the bar and the public on his character, judgment, legal ability, temperament, and commitment to equal justice under the law.

Attorney John Lane of Cedar Rapids chaired the Merit Selection Panel. Other members of the Panel were John Gray, attorney from Sioux City; Beth Hansen, attorney from Waterloo; Anne Laverty, attorney from Cedar Rapids; Liz Mathis, community member from Cedar Rapids; Dale Todd, community member from Cedar Rapids; and Kevin Visser, attorney from Cedar Rapids. The recommendation of the Panel to reappoint Judge Scoles was unqualified and unanimous.

Judge Scoles was born in Charles City, Iowa, in 1951. After earning a B.A. from the University of Northern Iowa in 1973, he taught math and coached for three years. Judge Scoles then attended the University of Iowa College of Law, receiving a J.D. in 1979. After law school, Judge Scoles moved to Mason City, Iowa, where he clerked for the judges in the Second Judicial District of Iowa. Following his clerkship, Judge Scoles practiced law in Mason City with the firm of DeVries, Scoles, and Price. In October 1986, Judge Scoles was appointed an Iowa District Court Judge. He was named Assistant Chief Judge of the Second Judicial District in 1992 and served as Chief Judge of the Second Judicial District from February 2005 until his appointment to the federal bench.

On March 20, 2007, Jon Stuart Scoles was initially sworn in as a United States Magistrate Judge for the Northern District of Iowa upon recommendation of a Merit Selection Panel and a unanimous vote of the court. This reappointment to a second term similarly reflects the court's unanimous respect for his excellent credentials and character and unwavering commitment to equal justice under the law.

The office of United States Magistrate Judge was established by the Federal Magistrates Act of 1968, enacted by the Congress to create a new federal judicial officer who would conduct a wide range of judicial proceedings to expedite the disposition of the civil and criminal caseloads of the United States district courts. The authority that a Magistrate Judge exercises is the jurisdiction of the district court itself, delegated to the Magistrate judge by the District Judges of the court under governing statutory authority and local rules of court. The statutory authority of Magistrate Judges is set forth in the Federal Magistrates Act of 1968, as amended. The basic provisions are found at 28 U.S.C. § 636 and 18 U.S.C. § 3401.