http://www.RMGOnlineNews.com/news/index.cfm?nk=67680

KS Supreme Court Justice to retire

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — A Kansas Supreme Court justice whose votes in death penalty cases made him a political target plans to retire from the bench Sept. 8.

The decision announced Wednesday by Justice Lee Johnson will give Democratic Gov. Laura Kelly her first appointment to the seven-member high court. It will not require Kansas Senate confirmation.

Johnson was appointed to the Supreme Court in 2007 by Democratic Gov. Kathleen Sebelius after serving six years on the state Court of Appeals.

He and other justices drew criticism for overturning death sentences in several capital murder cases.

In 2014, a group formed by victims' friends and family sought to oust Johnson in a statewide yes-or-no vote on whether he would stay on the court. The vote to retain him was less than 53 percent.

Associated Press