

# Democrats have one seat left on the Ohio Supreme Court. At least four Republicans are vying for it

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COLUMBUS, Ohio—Four Republicans are vying to run in 2026 against Ohio Supreme Court Justice Jennifer Brunner, the only remaining Democrat holding statewide office.

Rocky River Municipal Court Judge Joseph Burke, Fifth District Court of Appeals Judge Andrew King, Second District Court of Appeals Judge Ron Lewis, and ex-Franklin County Common Pleas Judge Colleen O'Donnell each made short campaign pitches to Ohio Republican Party leaders on Friday.

During short speeches, O'Donnell touted her time as a federal immigration judge in Laredo, Texas. Lewis pointed to his experience in Xenia working as city law director, city prosecutor, and a municipal judge.

King and Burke each touted how they won their current positions by unseating Democratic incumbents.

Brunner, a former Ohio secretary of state from Columbus, is the only Democrat currently serving on the seven-member Ohio Supreme Court, after Democratic Justices Melody Stewart and Mike Donnelly were unseated last November. That's also when Sherrod Brown, the only Democrat holding a non-judicial statewide office, lost his bid for reelection to the U.S. Senate.

Brunner, 68, confirmed on Saturday that she is running for reelection next year. In March, she [squelched a rumor](#) that she would resign from the court this summer to run for an unspecified statewide office in 2026.

Brunner [was elected to the Supreme Court in 2020](#), during the last election in which Supreme Court races were technically nonpartisan.

The following year, the GOP-controlled Ohio legislature [altered state law](#) so Supreme Court nominees now appear on general-election ballots with their party labels next to

their names -- a change that has hurt Democrats as Ohio has trended more Republican in recent years.

Since then, Democrats have not won a single race for the court. Brunner [lost her bid for chief justice in 2022](#) but remained on the court to fulfill her existing term.