

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 2nd Session of the 56th Legislature (2018)

3 HOUSE
4 RESOLUTION 1025

By: Ritze

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7 AS INTRODUCED

8 A Resolution petitioning the Trial Division of the
9 Court on the Judiciary to assume jurisdiction and
10 institute proceedings for the removal of a certain
11 judge from office; and directing distribution.

12 WHEREAS, the Code of Judicial Conduct for Oklahoma judges
13 provides that an independent and honorable judiciary is
14 indispensable to justice in our society and that a judge should
15 participate in establishing, maintaining and enforcing high
16 standards of conduct; and

17 WHEREAS, personal observation of high standards is critical so
18 that the integrity and independence of the judiciary will be
19 preserved; and

20 WHEREAS, the Code of Judicial Conduct for Oklahoma judges
21 further provides that a judge should respect and comply with the law
22 and act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in
23 the integrity and impartiality of the judiciary; and
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1 WHEREAS, District Judge Wallace Coppedge, Marshall County Judge
2 of the Twentieth Judicial District, exercising judicial power under
3 the Oklahoma Constitution and laws of the State of Oklahoma, has
4 wholly failed to comply with certain provisions of the Code of
5 Judicial Conduct by authorizing the plea bargain negotiated between
6 the prosecution and attorneys for the defendant in the criminal case
7 of State of Oklahoma vs. Benjamin Lawrence Petty, Murray County
8 District Court Case Number CF-2016-00159; and

9 WHEREAS, the failure of District Judge Wallace Coppedge to
10 reject the terms of the negotiated plea bargain constitutes a gross
11 neglect of duty; and

12 WHEREAS, Section 1 of Article VII-A of the Oklahoma Constitution
13 provides that the judges of any court, exercising judicial power
14 under the provisions of Article VII, or under any other provision of
15 the Oklahoma Constitution, shall be subject to removal from office
16 by proceedings in the Court on the Judiciary; and

17 WHEREAS, Section 1 of Article VII-A of the Oklahoma Constitution
18 provides certain causes for the removal of a judge from office,
19 which includes gross neglect of duty; and

20 WHEREAS, the Court on the Judiciary, created pursuant to Section
21 2 of Article VII-A of the Oklahoma Constitution, is vested with sole
22 and exclusive jurisdiction to hear and determine causes concerning
23 the removal of judges from office; and

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1 WHEREAS, jurisdiction of the Trial Division of the Court on the
2 Judiciary may be invoked and proceedings commenced upon the filing
3 of a Resolution of the House of Representatives of the State of
4 Oklahoma.

5 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
6 OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THE 56TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

7 THAT pursuant to Section 4 of Article VII-A of the Oklahoma
8 Constitution, the House of Representatives of the State of Oklahoma
9 petitions the Trial Division of the Court on the Judiciary to assume
10 jurisdiction and institute proceedings to remove District Judge
11 Wallace Coppedge, Marshall County Judge of the Twentieth Judicial
12 District from office for gross neglect of duty which, pursuant to
13 Section 1 of Article VII-A of the Oklahoma Constitution, shall be
14 cause for removal from such office.

15 THAT a copy of this resolution be dispatched to each member of
16 the Court on the Judiciary, the Clerk of the Oklahoma Supreme Court
17 and the Administrative Director of the Courts.

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19 56-2-9708 SD 02/12/18

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