

CHRISTINE O. GREGOIRE  
Governor



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

P.O. Box 40002 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0002 • (360) 902-4111

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**Media Contact: Governor's Communications**  
**Phone: 360-902-4136**

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## **Gov. Gregoire appoints retired Yakima County judge to chair Sunshine Committee**

**OLYMPIA** – Gov. Chris Gregoire today announced the appointment of retired Judge Michael Schwab to chair the Public Records Exemption Accountability Committee, commonly called the Sunshine Committee.

“Judge Schwab has a passion for public service,” Gregoire said. “His commitment to volunteerism, combined with his demonstrated fairness and commitment to improving the law make him the perfect candidate to fill this role. I congratulate him on this appointment, and am confident he will serve the citizens of Washington state well.”

Schwab recently retired from the Yakima County Superior Court, where he presided since 1990 as a judge and court commissioner.

“The Sunshine Committee performs a valuable function in reviewing the public records disclosure law,” Schwab said. “I am honored by this appointment and I look forward to working with the committee to develop meaningful recommendations so that the Public Disclosure Law can continue to be a vital part of the state’s public policy.”

Schwab began his legal career in 1969, when he arrived in Yakima as a Volunteers In Service To America lawyer. With VISTA, Schwab worked with migrant farm workers – and immersed himself into the local community, eventually establishing his own private law firm, a practice he maintained for 16 years. He was appointed judge in 1998 following 8 years as a court commissioner. During that time he worked on numerous projects involved with the administration of justice, such as the Yakima County Public Defender Program and the Yakima County Legal Services Programs for low-income people.

The Public Records Exemption Accountability Committee periodically reviews the exemptions

to the Washington public records disclosure law to determine if they still serve the public interest. The committee was created by legislation signed into law in 2007.

The Committee is composed of thirteen members, six of which are appointed by the Governor. The Attorney General appoints two members, the State Auditor appoints one member and the Legislature appoints one member from each caucus of the State House and State Senate.

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