

Jennifer M. Perkins
JUDGE

Court of Appeals

State of Arizona, Division One
State Courts Building
1501 West Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

September 18, 2026

Peter Gentala, Esq.
President, Center for Arizona Policy
surveys@azpolicy.org

Dear Mr. Gentala:

Thank you for inviting me to explain how I understand the work of a judge.

People, through their constitutions and laws, delegate judicial authority and set its limits. A judge earns the public's trust by staying within those limits: by reaching the conclusion the law requires, explaining it clearly, and holding to it even when she might have preferred a different result. When a judge's own preferences decide cases, the law stops being law and becomes merely the will of whoever happens to hold the office.

Written law is, in a sense, a promise the government makes to those it governs, and a court's task is to hold everyone—including the government—to that promise. A judge defers when the people's representatives act within their constitutional authority and intervenes when they exceed it. The judge makes that determination by adhering to the text that lawmakers adopted, not bending it to reach a preferred result. The separation of powers is not an abstraction; it is critical to the rule of law.

Every case is different, and I approach each one with an open mind. I look to the arguments the parties make, the wisdom of my colleagues, and my own research in reaching a conclusion on how the law applies to the facts as presented.

It has been the honor of my professional life to serve the people of Arizona on the Court of Appeals, and I hope to continue that service for another term.

Sincerely,

/s/ Jennifer M. Perkins

Hon. Jennifer M. Perkins
Judge, Arizona Court of Appeals