

Office of the Vermont Secretary of State
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**Althea Kroger,
Impeachment Requested,
No Legislative action taken,
1996**

In the spring of 1995, the Vermont Assistant Judges Association (VAJA) unsuccessfully tried to mediate conflicts over the administration of county business and personal differences between Chittenden County Assistant Judges Althea Kroger and Elizabeth Gretkowski. The feud became more heated when Kroger wrote an "Its My Turn" column for the Burlington Free Press in August and Gretkowski published a response. Kroger also filed a complaint against Gretkowski with the Judicial Conduct Board.

The VAJA investigated and held a number of hearings to determine whether either judge had violated the law. On November 18th, 1995, the Association requested that Kroger resign. When she refused, the matter was turned over to the Judicial Conduct Board. The Board drafted papers asking the legislature to impeach Kroger.

On January 24th, 1996 [House Resolution #20](#) ordered the House Judiciary Committee to investigate the "alleged impeachable actions of Assistant Judge Althea Kroger." The resolution claimed that there appeared to be reasonable grounds that Kroger committed impeachable acts under the state constitution, including perjury under oath and making false allegations of wrongdoing with respect to another county officer.

The House Judiciary held hearings, but ultimately took no action. The House Judiciary Committee was accused by some of "passing the buck" to the Judicial Conduct Board. In October of 1996, "a four-member majority of the Judicial Conduct Board found that certain public statements made by respondent were false, deceptive, and/or misleading." The Board did not "recommend a sanction because five members did not concur." The unresolved case was sent to the Supreme Court.

In March 1997, Kroger took a leave of absence.

In July 1997, the Vermont Supreme Court (In re [Kroger No. 96-495](#)) "conclude[d] that some of the statements made by respondent violated the Code and accordingly sanction respondent by suspending her from serving in a judicial capacity for one year." The Court found that Kroger had made false statements under oath while testifying at the VACJ hearings.

Kroger resigned in December 1997 and, in February of 1998, Thomas Crowley was appointed by the Governor to take her place.

On August 31st, 1998 the Vermont Supreme Court stated (In re [Kroger 98-196](#)) that "Assistant Judge Althea Kroger is hereby publicly reprimanded for violating Canons 2A, 3C(1) and 4A(2) by engaging in conduct which undermined public confidence in the integrity of the judiciary and brought the office of assistant judge into disrespect."