

KS Supreme Court Justice to retire

**TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — A Kansas Supreme Court justice whose votes in death penalty cases made him a political target plans to retire from the bench Sept. 8.**

**The decision announced Wednesday by Justice Lee Johnson will give Democratic Gov. Laura Kelly her first appointment to the seven-member high court. It will not require Kansas Senate confirmation.**

**Johnson was appointed to the Supreme Court in 2007 by Democratic Gov. Kathleen Sebelius after serving six years on the state Court of Appeals.**

**He and other justices drew criticism for overturning death sentences in several capital murder cases.**

**In 2014, a group formed by victims' friends and family sought to oust Johnson in a statewide yes-or-no vote on whether he would stay on the court. The vote to retain him was less than 53 percent.**

Associated Press