

N.L. Liberals criticize judicial appointment

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[CBC News](#)

The official Opposition in the Newfoundland and Labrador legislature is taking the government to task over the recent appointment of a provincial court judge who was convicted of failing to pay import taxes.

Days before Christmas, Don Singleton was appointed to the bench in Grand Falls-Windsor.

Omitted from Singleton's biography was a guilty plea in August 2005 to charges of illegally obtaining tobacco and alcohol from an Italian duty-free shop operating at the military base in Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

Singleton pleaded guilty to two charges but he was given an absolute discharge, which means he has no criminal record.

Liberal party justice critic Kelvin Parsons said the discharge is irrelevant.

"I'm sure the public are going to have concerns, " Parsons said.

He said the appointment is an insult to members of the legal community who may have had excellent qualifications for the job but are passed over for someone who broke the law while he was a practising lawyer.