



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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## **CONTACT**

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### **SENIOR UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT**

After an extraordinary thirty-seven years of service as a judge of the United States District Court for the District of Connecticut, Senior Judge Ellen Bree Burns has decided to retire, effective March 31, 2015, and has so informed President Barack Obama.

Nominated by President Jimmy Carter, Judge Burns was appointed on May 17, 1978, becoming the first woman to be named to the federal bench in the District of Connecticut. She served as Chief Judge of the District from November 18, 1988, through September 1, 1992, when she assumed senior status.

Chief Judge Janet C. Hall said: "Judge Burns has been an outstanding judge, public servant, and role model during the 37 years she served as a Federal Judge. She has admirably presided over countless civil and criminal cases and trials on this Court. Members of the Bar have repeatedly stated that there has been no better judge before whom to try a case. She is noted for her fairness and her ability to let attorneys try their case while she controlled her courtroom to assure collegiality and fairness. She has been an extraordinary jurist and public servant to the people of Connecticut as well as an inspiration to my colleagues and me. Sadly, our court will not be the same without her. We will miss her greatly."

Born in New Haven, Judge Burns received a Bachelor of Arts degree, *summa cum laude*, from Albertus Magnus College in 1944 and an LL.B. degree from Yale Law School in 1947. She was Director of Legislative Legal Services of the Legislative Commissioners' Office from 1949-73. Prior to her appointment to the United States District Court, Judge Burns was a judge on the Connecticut Circuit Court, the Court of Common Pleas, and the Superior Court.

"I have enjoyed my tenure on the Court," said Burns. "It seems like only yesterday that I took the oath of office. The work has been immeasurably gratifying, and it has been an honor and a privilege to serve the people of my state and country as a federal judge."

Judge Burns has been frequently honored. For her service and contributions to the legal profession, she has received numerous awards, including: the Connecticut Bar Association Award for Service to the Bar and Legislature in 1971; the Judiciary Award from the Connecticut Trial Lawyers Association in 1978; the Judiciary Award of the Connecticut Bar Association in 1987; and the Raymond E. Baldwin Public Service Award of the Bridgeport School of Law at Quinnipiac College in 1992. Judge Burns is a Trustee Emerita of Albertus Magnus College, and is a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation and the Connecticut Bar Foundation; she is also a member of the New Haven County Bar Association, the Connecticut Bar Association, and of the American Bar Association.

Asked if she would choose the same career if given the opportunity to start again, Judge Burns unreservedly replied, "Absolutely! I have loved being a judge. I would change nothing!"

Currently there are fourteen district judges on the Connecticut bench, in addition to five magistrate judges and three bankruptcy judges.

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