



**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE**

Joel W. Solomon United States Courthouse  
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Chattanooga, Tennessee 37402

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**PASSING OF SENIOR U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE R. LEON JORDAN**



Senior U.S. District Judge Robert Leon Jordan, 89, died on February 27 after decades of faithful public service. The judges of the Eastern District of Tennessee will forever remember him as a hard-working and fair jurist and a helpful, quick-witted, and supportive colleague. Members of the bar will also fondly remember him for his habit of consistently starting court a few minutes earlier than scheduled.

Judge Jordan was born June 28, 1934, in Woodland, Tennessee. He served in the United States Army from 1954 until 1956. He earned his B.S. in 1958 from the University of Tennessee and his J.D. in 1960 from the University of Tennessee College of Law.

Judge Jordan began his law practice in Nashville with the firm of Goodpasture, Carpenter, Dale and Woods before becoming a partner in the law firm of Bryant, Price, Brandt, Jordan and Fox in

Johnson City in 1971. In 1980, Governor Lamar Alexander appointed him to Tennessee's Chancery Court, and he was elected to a full term in 1982.

In 1988, Congressman James Quillen encouraged Judge Jordan to offer himself for service on the federal bench. His personal relationship with Senator Jim Sasser helped him secure bipartisan support after President Ronald Reagan nominated him to succeed Judge Robert L. Taylor. Judge Jordan was sworn into office on November 15, 1988, and served as a senior judge since November 30, 2001. He capably maintained an active docket until just a few months ago.

While Judge Jordan presided over many significant civil and criminal matters during his nearly four decades on the federal bench, perhaps the most notable occurred just after his tenure began: a 99-day jury trial involving the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation following the failures of Butcher banks. He championed the cause of the acquisition and building of the Howard H. Baker, Jr. United States Courthouse in Knoxville in the 1990s. Judge Jordan served for several years as chairman of the planning committee of the Sixth Circuit Judicial Conference, which honored him in June 2001 for his leadership. At the Judicial Conference in 2004, he was elected president of the Sixth Circuit District Judges Association. He was also instrumental in the formation of the Federal Bar Association of the Court's Northeastern Division. In December 2014, he was presented the Judicial Excellence Award by the Knoxville Bar Association.

Judge Jordan's beloved wife of 67 years, Dottie, died at the age of 91 just over two months ago.

The Court is deeply grateful for Judge Jordan's service, dedication, and example and extends its sincerest condolences to his family.

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