

For Immediate Release

UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS
Honorable Laura K. Grandy, Chief Judge
Donna N. Beyersdorfer, Clerk
750 Missouri Avenue
East St. Louis, IL 62201

Southern District of Illinois Mourns the Death of the Honorable Kenneth J. Meyers

EAST ST. LOUIS, Illinois – (April 14, 2018). It is with deep sadness that the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Illinois announces the death of Judge Kenneth J. Meyers on April 14, 2018.

Judge Meyers was born in Gary, Indiana on February 25, 1944 to Charles and Luella Meyers. He was one of six children. Shortly after his birth, the family moved to his father's home town, Neoga, Illinois, where Judge Meyers attended school. In 1962, he graduated from high school and entered Eastern Illinois University. After earning a Bachelor of Science degree in history from Eastern, Judge Meyers entered Indiana University School of Law in 1966 and received his Juris Doctorate degree in 1969, graduating in the top 10% of his class.

Upon graduating from law school, Judge Meyers worked for Ryan & Heller in Mattoon, Illinois until 1971. He then joined the Danville, Illinois law firm of Dukes, O'Rourke & Stewart, which later became Dukes, O'Rourke, Stewart & Meyers. In 1975, he was appointed the first full-time United States Magistrate Judge for the then Eastern District of Illinois. He served in that capacity for eleven years. During his tenure as a Magistrate, Judge Meyers' primary responsibility was to handle litigation arising from the United States Penitentiary in Marion, Illinois, the only maximum security federal prison at that time. In 1985, he presided over a case involving the lockdown of the Penitentiary following the murder of two prison guards. His ruling in that case set the first guidelines for implementing prison lockdowns.

In 1986, he was appointed Chief Judge of the United States Bankruptcy Court in the Southern District of Illinois, initially holding court in East St. Louis, Alton, Mount Vernon and Effingham. Judge Meyers was responsible for opening the bankruptcy court in Benton, and he then was able to conduct the majority of hearings in either East St. Louis or Benton. He served on the Federal Bankruptcy Rules Committee, where he chaired the subcommittee on forms. He was also a liaison member of the Federal Committee on Evidence Rules, and served on the Ad Hoc Committee on Time Computation and the Forms Modernization Project. In 2002, under the direction of Judge Meyers, the Bankruptcy Court in the Southern District of Illinois became one of the first courts to successfully convert from a paper filing system to an electronic one. Judge Meyers served as Chief Judge until 2010, at which time he was appointed to recall status. When he retired from recall status in 2015, he had served on the federal bench for 40 years.

Judge Meyers ran an efficient and orderly courtroom, and prided himself on never starting court late. He was able to quickly analyze complicated legal issues and resolve complex cases. His

intellect, keen sense of fairness and quick wit were recognized and respected by his colleagues, members of the bar and his staff. He will be deeply missed by all. As stated by Judge Michael Reagan, Chief Judge of the United States District Court, "Judge Meyers left indelible marks of compassion, efficiency, ethics and competence on the jurisprudence of the Bankruptcy Court of the Southern District of Illinois."

Laura K. Grandy, Chief Judge of the Bankruptcy Court, succeeded Judge Meyers. She remembers him as a good friend and mentor. "When we first met, Judge Meyers told me, "Kid, always be prepared and always be on time and we'll always get along." She still uses that advice to this day. "Judge Meyers was a spark of energy that ignited us all to do our best work. In addition to his dedicated sense of service, he had a great sense of humor and mischief. In the town where he grew up, he was known to have tipped and/or relocated a few outhouses in his youth. At the courthouse, his sense of humor and insight created a court family that was ready to take on complex judicial projects. He was respected by both those he ruled for and those he ruled against. To those who knew him well, he was fair, fun and unforgettable. I was fortunate to call him my friend. The halls of justice have lost one of their most creative and dedicated jurists."

Judge Meyers married Susan Robbins in 1965. They had two children, Angela (Meyers) Kniery and Greg Meyers, and five grandchildren. Susan passed away in 2012 and Judge Meyers later married Mindy Koch, who has two sons, Kraig Koch and Ed Koch. The Court extends its deepest sympathy and condolences to Judge Meyers' entire family.