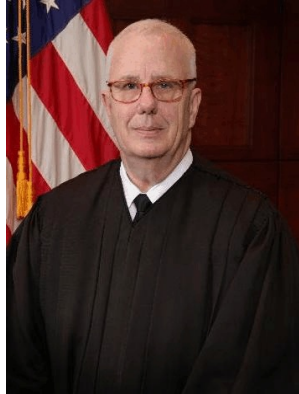


## RESOLUTION

**SENIOR STATUS  
of  
THE HONORABLE RICHARD G. KOPF  
United States District Judge  
District of Nebraska**



*Presented by*  
The Honorable Laurie Smith Camp  
Chief Judge  
United States District Court  
District of Nebraska

We, the bench and bar of the Eighth Circuit, gathered at the 2012 Judicial Conference, observe that our friend and colleague, the Honorable Richard G. Kopf, took senior status on December 1, 2011. This occasion permits us to recognize the outstanding contributions Judge Kopf has made to our profession and to the people he serves.

Judge Kopf was born in Toledo, Ohio. He graduated from Kearney State College (now the University of Nebraska at Kearney) in 1969. In 1972, he graduated from the University of Nebraska College of Law. He served as a law clerk to United States Circuit Judge Donald R. Ross for two years following law school. He spent the next 12 years in private practice in Lexington, Nebraska.

Judge Kopf served as a United States magistrate judge from 1987 to 1992. President George Herbert Walker Bush nominated Judge Kopf to a seat on the federal bench on April 7, 1992. The Senate approved the nomination on May 21, 1992. Judge Kopf served as chief judge of the District of Nebraska from 1999 to 2004. Of Judge Kopf's appointment, then Senator Bob Kerrey predicted that Judge Kopf's career as a federal district judge would be "one of genuine distinction." This prediction has proven to be an understatement of Judge Kopf's accomplishments.

Judge Kopf has been recognized nationally and internationally for his leadership in all aspects of court technology. As chief judge, Judge Kopf created the first paperless

federal court in the nation in 2002. Under his leadership, for the first time in history, lawyers began filing federal civil and criminal cases electronically, and then managing those cases online. In addition, court staff converted over 18,000 cases filed before 2002 to the electronic system. Judge Kopf also pioneered the implementation of other programs, such as digital court reporting, which he anticipates will reduce the cost of public access to court records and increase their availability. Some might argue that Judge Kopf has singlehandedly saved our national forests, made court records more accessible to the public, and enabled lawyers to file documents and retrieve court records at all hours of the day and night, from anywhere in the world. Thanks to Judge Kopf, lawyers practicing in federal court can work 24 hours a day, seven days a week, just like he does!

During Judge Kopf's tenure as chief judge, he led the District of Nebraska through a time of great adversity. The court's judicial resources were cut by 25%. Meanwhile, the district's federal criminal caseload reached three times the per-judge national average, placing Nebraska among the most burdened of the 94 federal districts. Under Judge Kopf's leadership, the federal judges tried 68% more cases than the average district judge, and ranked near the top of the nation in the timely disposition of civil and criminal cases. To achieve this level of performance, and recognizing that justice delayed is justice denied, Judge Kopf assigned himself a double caseload.

Judge Kopf's leadership and vision have also been recognized and put to good use by the Judicial Conference Committee on Codes of Conduct, the Robert Van Pelt American Inn of Court, and the Nebraska State Bar Foundation.

Judge Kopf has rendered hundreds of decisions during his years on the federal bench on many important issues. He is known for writing fair, frank, and honest opinions. Many of his opinions are also very funny. In one such opinion, Judge Kopf was asked to restrain a high school from prohibiting a student from playing baseball. The student had twice violated the school's prohibition against consuming alcohol. In the opinion, Judge Kopf quoted Ernest Lawrence Thayer's *Casey at the Bat* in its entirety, and decided a temporary restraining order was not warranted. He wrote, "[e]xcept in the most compelling cases, public schools should be run by those assigned by elected officials to run them, and not by geezers wearing black robes. While I know a fair amount about baseball and beer, I know virtually nothing about educating and disciplining high school students who drink beer and play baseball." This passage perfectly captures Judge Kopf's spirited sense of humor, intelligence, and candor.

Judge Kopf is a dedicated judge with a tremendous passion for the law. He is also a devoted father and husband, doting grandfather, and all-around remarkable man. The bench and the bar are fortunate that Judge Kopf continues to maintain a full caseload, despite his retirement to senior status. We, his colleagues, are grateful for his service and know Judge Kopf's career will continue to be one of great distinction.