

**RESOLUTION**

**IN MEMORIAM**

**of**

**THE HONORABLE THOMAS M. SHANAHAN  
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, honor our friend and colleague, the Honorable Thomas M. Shanahan, and take notice with sorrow of his death on December 27, 2011. We will remember him with lasting admiration and affection.

Judge Shanahan was born May 5, 1934, in Omaha, Nebraska. He attended Creighton Preparatory School, and graduated from Notre Dame University, *magna cum laude*, in 1956. In 1959, he graduated from Georgetown University Law Center. He spent the next 23 years in private practice in Ogallala, Nebraska. In 1983, Governor Bob Kerrey appointed him to the Nebraska Supreme Court. Justice Shanahan served on the Nebraska Supreme Court until 1993. President William J. Clinton nominated him on August 6, 1993, to a new seat on the federal bench created by the Civil Justice Reform Act of 1990. The Senate approved the nomination on November 20, 1993. Judge Shanahan took senior status on May 5, 2004, and retired on February 1, 2007.

At Judge Shanahan's investiture ceremony, Nebraska State Senator Peter Hoagland stated Judge Shanahan reflected the core values of Nebraska: "independence, tough mindedness, strength, and willingness to dissent." Attorney John Brownrigg, speaking on behalf of the Nebraska State Bar Association, stated Judge Shanahan was "the kind of person we should all hope to be [and] . . . the kind of judge we have a right to expect." Judge Shanahan earned the respect and admiration of his federal counterparts

as well. Upon his retirement from the federal bench, United States District Judge Richard G. Kopf wrote, "Tom Shanahan has served Nebraska with great distinction on both the State and Federal Courts. His insight and intelligence on the full time bench will be sorely missed."

Judge Shanahan rendered hundreds of decisions throughout his years on the state and federal benches. He wrote well crafted and colorful opinions, and was known for his witticisms and sensitivity to individual rights. He earned numerous honors during his career. He served as president of the Western Nebraska Bar Association and was a member of the Nebraska State Bar Association's House of Delegates and its Executive Council. He received the Omaha Bar Association's 2008 Law Day Award, which recognized his exemplary ethics and outstanding contributions to the administration of justice. He was particularly proud of the Alumnus of the Year Award he received in 2010 from the Notre Dame Club of Omaha.

Judge Shanahan is survived by his wife of 55 years, Jane Lodge Shanahan, his children, Catherine Trofholz, Thomas M. Shanahan, II, Mary Elizabeth Shanahan, and Timothy Shanahan; his grandchildren, Aaron, Matthew, Aundrea, and Mary Catherine Trofholz and Nicholas, Caroline, and Elizabeth Shanahan; and two brothers, Brian Shanahan and James Shanahan.

Judge Shanahan was a thoughtful and compassionate jurist and colleague. He was even-tempered, patient, and respectful. At his investiture, Judge Shanahan stated, "All of us, even judges, are human beings and we're here for such a short time, but it is an opportunity to do so much good. And I hope, if I haven't embarked on that course yet, to certainly embark on that as a federal judge." This passage perfectly captures Judge Shanahan's humility, intelligence, and extraordinary kindness. We are grateful to have served with such an honorable man.