

# **RESOLUTIONS**

**UNITED STATES COURTS  
for the  
EIGHTH CIRCUIT**

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**Adopted  
Eighth Circuit Judicial Conference  
The Broadmoor  
Colorado Springs, Colorado  
July 11, 1991**

SENIOR STATUS  
of  
THE HONORABLE WARREN K. URBOM  
United States District Judge  
District of Nebraska

Presented by: The Honorable Lyle E. Strom  
Chief Judge  
United States District Court  
District of Nebraska

We, the bench and bar of the Eighth Circuit, meeting at the 1991 Judicial Conference in Colorado Springs, Colorado, observe that our friend and colleague, the Honorable Warren K. Urbom, took senior status on January 1, 1991. This occasion permits us to recognize the outstanding contributions he has made to our profession and to the people he serves.

Warren K. Urbom is a native of Arapahoe, Nebraska. He received his B.A. degree with highest distinction from Nebraska Wesleyan University in Lincoln. He later graduated from the University of Michigan Law School, with distinction, in 1953.

His contributions to his profession are legion. He was a practicing attorney in Lincoln until April 24, 1970, when he was appointed to the bench by President Nixon. He served as chief judge of the United States Court for the District of Nebraska from 1972 to 1986. He is a member of the Nebraska State Bar Association, the American Bar Association, and the Lincoln, Nebraska, Bar Association. He has served on the board of directors of the Federal Judicial Center, and chaired the FJC Committee on orientation for newly appointed district judges. He has taught at the National Judicial College. He has served since 1983 on the Eighth Circuit Committee on Model Jury Instructions, and since 1975, on the Nebraska Supreme Court's Committee on Pattern Jury Instructions. He was a member of the State-Federal Judicial Council of Nebraska from 1977-86, and was president of the United States District Judges' Association for the Eighth Circuit from 1977 to 1979.

Not only has he provided leadership and education to fellow judges, but also to students and lawyers. He taught a trial advocacy course at the University of Nebraska College of Law for eleven years. In addition, he, along with the dean of the college, started the Lincoln Chapter of "Inns of Court," an organization of fifty judges, lawyers, and law students committed to improving trial advocacy skills. He has taught at innumerable legal education forums for practicing attorneys, judges, and law students.

Judge Urbom also has an outstanding record of service to his church. He served on the board of governors of Nebraska Wesleyan University for thirteen years. He currently serves the General Conference of the United Methodist Church as a member of the Commission on the Status of Women, and has taught a Bible study class for some thirty years.

He is a popular speaker, having given no fewer than four hundred speeches, including addressing, on two separate occasions, the Annual Convention of the International Society of Barristers.

He is known for his willingness to explore new alternatives in the administration of justice, such as the development of alternative sentences. The Chief Justice of the United States invited him to serve on the United States Sentencing Commission, a post he declined because of the death of a fellow judge in the District of Nebraska. However, he serves on an advisory committee to the Commission. He has also been innovative in the conduct of trials, for example, allowing Native American witnesses to take the oath upon a sacred peace pipe, allowing jurors to take notes and ask questions, and conducting two-a-day trials.

Judge Urbom has presided over federal court proceedings throughout the Eighth Circuit. His longest trial was in a criminal case in Kansas City, which lasted 189 trial days and required him to travel between Kansas City and Lincoln each week for nine months, trying to keep up with his Lincoln docket on weekends. During his twenty years of active service on the federal bench, over 10,000 civil cases have been assigned to his docket, as well as 780 criminal cases involving 1,057 defendants.

Like other judges, Judge Urbom has faced and decided many cases, involving sensitive issues, such as abortion, drug testing, First Amendment freedoms, the death penalty, obscenity, prayer, and prisoners' rights. Seriousness, fairness, and respect radiate from the bench when he is presiding, and all who appear before him are confident that each claim, each defense, each argument, will receive serious, sober consideration with true understanding and intellectual honesty.

Judge Urbom gives himself and his best talents to our quest for justice. He does not stop at deciding the issue before him. Rather, he thinks beyond the specific issue to assure himself that his resolution of it is in keeping with an overall scheme of fairness, order, and consistency with developing law. The people of Nebraska and the nation are well served by his talents and conscience. Our profession has grown from his contributions, and each of us has been touched by them. We, his colleagues in Nebraska, feel privileged to have known and served on the bench with him.

**RESOLUTIONS**

**9**

We salute Judge Urbom on this occasion. We wish him many more years of service on the bench, and many more years of happiness with his wife and family.

Mr. Chairman, I move the adoption of this resolution.