

United States District Court  
District of Nebraska  
Roman L. Hruska U.S. Courthouse  
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ROBERT F. ROSSITER, JR.  
Chief United States District Judge

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**DECEMBER 5, 2023**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The Honorable Lyle E. Strom passed away on Friday, December 1. Judge Strom was nominated by President Ronald Reagan to a seat on the United States District Court for the District of Nebraska. After confirmation by the United States Senate, he was sworn in on November 1, 1985. Judge Strom often noted with pride that his appointment coincided with All Saints' Day. He assumed active senior judge status in 1995 and inactive senior judge status in December 2017.

Chief Judge Robert F. Rossiter, Jr. said of Judge Strom: "As a trial lawyer, Judge Strom was one of the finest the State of Nebraska has seen. As a judge, he was even-handed, fair, and respected by other judges, Court staff, and those who appeared before him. As a person, through his many selfless endeavors, he was dedicated to bettering our community. He was a great man who will be missed by our Court family, the Nebraska bar, and the community at large."

Judge Strom was born and raised in Omaha, Nebraska. After serving in the United States Merchant Marine during World War II, he graduated from Creighton University, and from Creighton Law School, with distinction, in 1953. He was respected as one of the premier trial lawyers in the state of Nebraska during his career in private practice. Judge Strom also had a full home life. He and his lovely wife, Regina, raised seven beautiful children.

Judge Strom served as chief judge for the District of Nebraska from November 1, 1987, to November 1, 1994. In that capacity, he spearheaded the campaign to secure a new federal courthouse in Omaha and oversaw construction of the landmark building. In addition, as chief judge he successfully lobbied for an additional federal judgeship in the district to keep pace with rising caseloads.

Throughout his career as a lawyer and a judge, Judge Strom was renowned for leading by example in promoting collegiality, civility, professionalism, and good humor. He served as a fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers, a fellow in the International Academy of Trial Lawyers, a Bronze Fellow in the Nebraska State Bar Foundation, a delegate in the Nebraska State Bar Association's House of Delegates, President of the Omaha Rotary Club, Chairman of the Mid-America Council of the Boy Scouts of America, President of the Omaha Bar Association, President of the Nebraska State Bar Association,

chair of the Eighth Circuit's Gender Fairness Task Force, and as a member of the Nebraska Supreme Court Committee on Practice and Procedure and the Eighth Circuit Judicial Council's Committee to Restructure the Circuit's Judicial Conference. His expertise in legal writing and analysis benefited the bench and bar through his drafting of Nebraska Model Jury Instructions, Nebraska Rules of Evidence, and law review articles. He was among the first federal judges to note the disparate racial impact of the federal sentencing guidelines related to crimes involving powder cocaine *vis a vis* crack cocaine, and he testified before Congress in support of amendments to the guidelines to address that disparate impact.

Judge Strom was honored with the Omaha Bar Association Lifetime Achievement Award, the Eighth Circuit Professionalism Award from the American Inns of Court, and the Creighton University School of Law Faculty Award. The Nebraska Bar Foundation's High School Mock Trial Competition was named in his honor in recognition of his many years of leadership in that competition at the state and national levels. A pupillage of the Robert M. Spire American Inn of Court also bears his name in honor of his many years of service to the American Inns of Court as a master of the bench.

Likewise, civic and charitable organizations have reaped the advantages of his participation. At his church, Judge Strom served on the board of trustees, on the finance committee, as chairman of the Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist program, and as a lector. He also was a member of the Archbishop's Committee for Educational Development. The civic organization perhaps most closely identified with Judge Strom is the Boy Scouts of America. He was a scoutmaster, and served on the executive committee and board of trustees of the Mid-America Council of the Boy Scouts of America. One of the scouting programs close to Judge Strom's heart was the Juvenile Diversion Program run in conjunction with the State of Nebraska's juvenile probation office to intercept young offenders before they travel too far down the wrong path in life. For his work with the Boy Scouts, Judge Strom received the 1982 Frontier District Award of Merit, the 1988 Silver Beaver Award, the 1994 William Spurgeon Boy Scout Explorer Award, and the 1996 Hall of Fame Lifetime Achievement Award.

The judges and Court staff of the United States District Court mourn the loss of Judge Strom. He was a trusted colleague, mentor, and friend, and we will deeply miss him. Our hearts and prayers are with Judge Strom's family and loved ones.