

Court Information Release



United States District Court
Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division
219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604

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Statement of Chief Judge Virginia M. Kendall on the Passing of Senior Circuit Judge Joel Flaum

Senior United States Circuit Judge Joel Flaum of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit passed away last night.

Judge Flaum was much loved by his colleagues and the greater legal community. He left an indelible mark on our court family, as many judges on this court clerked for him and many more were mentored by him.

Just three weeks ago, Judge Flaum received the 2024 Edward J. Devitt Distinguished Service to Justice Award in a ceremony presided over by Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr., of the U.S. Supreme Court. The Devitt Award honors an Article III judge who has had a distinguished career and made significant contributions to the administration of justice, the advancement of the rule of law, and the improvement of society as a whole.

Judge Flaum was appointed to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois in 1974 and served in this district until 1983, when he was elevated to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. He served as chief judge of Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals from 2000 to 2006.

Judge Flaum was born in Hudson, New York. He graduated from Union College in 1958 and Northwestern University School of Law in 1963. He went on to earn a Master of Laws degree from Northwestern in 1964.

Judge Flaum began his legal career at a Chicago law firm before entering a career in public service as an assistant state's attorney for Cook County, Illinois, in 1965. He later became First

Assistant Illinois Attorney General and was First Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois when he joined the federal bench. Judge Flaum served as a U.S. Naval Reserve lieutenant commander in the JAG Corps, from 1981 to 1992.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Judge Flaum, his family, and loved ones.

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