

Good morning,

I am writing to let you know that, after almost eleven years as Chief Justice, I have decided to retire from the bench effective February 5, 2018. When I began my tenure in 2007, I told my family and close friends that I thought ten years in a position of leadership was just about right. I continue to believe that and, therefore, have decided to move on to new tasks before I overstay my welcome.

I also write to thank each of you-plain and simple. Although the last ten years have been difficult from a budgetary point of view, which has resulted in uncertainty and reduced resources, you have never ceased to amaze me with your ability to do more with less. Individually and as a team, you have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to innovative change that has resulted in a Judicial Branch well equipped to fulfill its mission for the foreseeable future. Every day you have defined for me what professionalism and integrity should be in an organization. I want to mention just a few of your achievements over the last decade:

You have played an essential part in the Branch's strategic planning. Through your contribution of ideas during the focus groups and then your on-the-ground work implementing the plans, the Branch has improved its delivery of services to all of our stakeholders. You have also implemented innovative civil and family court reform that is cost-effective for the parties without sacrificing our responsibility to decide matters in a fair and efficient manner.

You have also improved access to justice for all litigants in an environment where the number of self-represented parties has substantially increased in both family and civil cases. These improvements include development of an award-winning website, simplification of forms and signage, expansion of court service centers, management of volunteer attorney initiatives and other pro bono efforts, significant improvement of translation services through training and making available language lines in 150 languages, and, perhaps most importantly, a clear commitment to a culture of "How can we help you." Your achievements in this area were recognized in 2014 when the Justice Index ranked Connecticut #1 overall among the States for ensuring access to civil and criminal courts.

With regard to technology, you have transitioned the Branch to being primarily paperless and made it possible for the public and bar to utilize our services remotely through videoconferencing, electronic postponement of jury duty and the ability to pay fines and fees online.

You have managed and maintained the Branch's infrastructure and human resource functions and overseen the construction of new courthouses despite reduced funding. You have kept us and the public safe in our courthouses despite increased security concerns.

Through training, you have worked hard to improve cultural competency in the Branch with regard to both your fellow employees and the public you serve. You have also significantly improved our ability to properly serve individuals with disabilities through ongoing training and accommodations. Additionally, you have instituted and participated in training programs that have resulted in national

accreditation for juvenile and adult probation, juvenile detention and our judicial marshal training academy. Through these efforts, you have made Connecticut a nationally recognized leader in providing services to juveniles and adults who pass through the criminal and juvenile systems.

Finally, you have worked with the legislative and executive branches to implement significant legislation protecting the independence of the Judicial Branch. You have also worked with the media to make sure the Branch is treated fairly and accurately in the press.

In short, it is your hard work that has transformed the Branch. Last week I attended the Diversity Week opening ceremony. It included a video in which many of you expressed how you identify. I had not seen the video before and was extremely moved by it. When I then spoke, I told the audience that "I identify as an incredibly lucky woman to have been able to work with all of you." As I move to the next phase in my career, I wish you only the best as you continue to carry on the mission.

Sincerely,
Chief Justice Rogers