



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
JONATHAN BROSTOFF
19TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rep. Brostoff Statement on Passing of Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson

MILWAUKEE – Upon hearing of the passing of former Wisconsin State Supreme Court Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson, State Representative Jonathan Brostoff (D-Milwaukee) released the following statement:

“Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson was a legend. A trailblazer, a brilliant legal mind, a revered jurist, and an inspiration for so many; she will be greatly missed.”

Shirley Abrahamson was first appointed to the Wisconsin Supreme Court in 1976, and went on to be elected to the position four times, retiring just last year. At the time of her appointment, Chief Justice Abrahamson was the first woman on the Court, though many more would go on to join her, following the trail she blazed over the course of her career. In 1996, as the most senior member of the Supreme Court, Abrahamson became Chief Justice - a position she would hold until 2015, when a conservative-backed amendment to the State Constitution changed the process for selecting the Chief Justice. By the time of her retirement in 2019, Chief Justice Abrahamson had made history as the first female Justice on the Wisconsin State Supreme Court, the Court’s first female Chief Justice, and the longest-tenured Justice in Wisconsin state history.

“Over her record-shattering 43 years on the bench, 19 of them as Chief Justice, Chief Justice Abrahamson proved herself to be the truest kind of public servant, always keeping those she served in mind. She worked tirelessly to illuminate the workings of the Court for the citizens of this state, travelling regularly to spend time in conversation with everyday people, championing the ‘Court with Class’ and ‘Justice on Wheels’ programs, and directing the Court under her leadership to hold its administrative meetings in public for the first time. And throughout her remarkable career, Chief Justice Abrahamson never lost one bit of her trademark kindness, warmth, and sense of humor. I was honored to have been sworn in by Chief Justice Abrahamson, and by the end of my tenure, I hope that I can look back on my oath and say that I upheld it even a fraction as well as she did.

My thoughts and prayers are with Chief Justice Abrahamson’s family and friends, and I wish them peace and comfort in this difficult time. May her memory be a blessing.”

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