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United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

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NEWS RELEASE

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Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals Honors Memory of Senior Judge Robert Boochever

SAN FRANCISCO – Judges of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit convened in a special session today to celebrate the memory of the late Senior Circuit Judge Robert Boochever. The proceeding was held at the Richard H. Chambers U.S. Courthouse in Pasadena, California.

Judge Boochever died peacefully on October 9, 2011, at his home in Pasadena. He had celebrated his 94th birthday one week earlier.

Also today, flags at state government buildings in Alaska were lowered to half-staff to honor Judge Boochever, the first Alaskan to sit on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals Chief Judge Alex Kozinski presided over the special court session and made opening remarks. Also speaking were a Ninth Circuit colleague, Senior Circuit Judge Dorothy W. Nelson; attorney Charles A. Bird, who clerked for Judge Boochever when he served as a justice of the Alaska Supreme Court; attorney Laurie Taylor, another former law clerk now serving the California State Court of Appeals; and Judge Boochever's daughter, Barbara Boochever Lindh.

Nominated by President Carter, Judge Boochever was confirmed by the Senate and received his judicial commission on June 18, 1980. He filled a seat vacated by Judge Shirley Hufstедler, who left the bench earlier that year to become the nation's first Secretary of Education. Judge Boochever served as an active judge for six years before taking senior status in 1986. He continued to carry a caseload for many more years, sitting on panels considering cases on submission well into his 80's.

Prior to coming onto the federal bench, Judge Boochever served on the Alaska Supreme Court from 1972 to 1980 and was the court's chief justice from 1975 to 1978.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, Judge Boochever received his B.A. from Cornell University in 1939, and his J.D. from Cornell University Law School in 1941. He served in the Army during World War II and was honorably discharged in 1945 at the rank of captain. He moved to Juneau, Alaska, in 1946 to take a job as an assistant U.S. Attorney for the Alaskan Territory. A year later, he went into private practice as a partner in the Juneau law firm of Faulkner, Banfield, Boochever & Doogan, where he remained until his appointment to the state bench.

After his appointment to the Ninth Circuit bench, Judge Boochever continued to live in Juneau for several years but found the travel too difficult and wearisome. He moved his family to Pasadena in 1983, but continued to maintain a home in Juneau. Until about 10 years ago, he visited Juneau regularly, spending time each July meeting with residents and members of the bar.

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals hears appeals of cases decided by federal trial courts and certain executive branch administrative agencies in nine western states and two Pacific Island jurisdictions. The court reported 12,141 appeals filed in fiscal year 2011.

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