

PRESS RELEASE
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U.S. District Court, District of Arizona Has Change of Chief Judges

Judge Roslyn O. Silver has stepped down as Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona effective September 3, 2013. Chief Judge Silver was appointed to the federal bench in 1994 by President Bill Clinton and assumed the position of Chief Judge in January of 2011 when her predecessor, Chief Judge John M. Roll, was tragically shot and killed along with five other victims while attending a “Congress on your Corner” event sponsored by Representative Gabrielle Giffords.

Chief Judge Silver was the first female to hold the top federal judicial post in the District of Arizona. She has spent the last three years leading the District through a judicial emergency, while ensuring the court continued to move forward following the loss of Chief Judge Roll. She has assumed senior judge status, and has handed the reigns over to Judge Raner C. Collins, who will be the first African American Chief Judge in the district. Judge Collins was appointed to the district court bench in 1998 by President Bill Clinton and he takes residence in the Tucson division. Judge Collins’ term as Chief Judge will come at a time when the district faces an unprecedented six judicial vacancies (out of 13 authorized district judgeships).

The District of Arizona has consistently ranked among the top five districts in the country for criminal felony filings yet the court has not received a new judgeship since 2002. The Federal Judgeship Act of 2013 recommends ten additional judgeships for the District of Arizona, one of the nations most overburdened federal courts. In addition to the critical need for Judicial resources in this district, Chief Judge Collins will be faced with leading the court through severe budgetary challenges due to Congressional budget sequestration. Judge Collins stated, “It is my hope to continue the trend of strong leadership and service to the people of Arizona as exemplified by the Chief Judges that preceded me.”

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