

For Immediate Release

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF INDIANA

**Southern District of Indiana Mourns the Loss of Senator Birch Bayh**

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana – March 14, 2019: The United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana mourns the death of former Senator Birch Bayh, who passed away overnight at the age of 91.

“The entire court family is saddened by the news of Senator Bayh’s passing,” said Chief Judge Jane Magnus-Stinson. “He was a leader not only for the citizens of Indiana, but for all Americans. From his roots in Terre Haute to his time in Washington, D.C., Senator Bayh strove to make equality a reality. It is fitting that our courthouse in Indianapolis bears his name, a constant reminder to those who visit that all people have the right to equal justice under law.”

Birch Bayh was born in Terre Haute on January 22, 1928. His political career began with his election to the Indiana House of Representative in 1954, and in 1958 he became the youngest Speaker of the House in the state’s history. He rose to national prominence when he defeated incumbent Senator Homer Capehart in a tightly contested election in 1962. In Senator Bayh’s first year in office, he became the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Constitutional Amendments.

This role led to Senator Bayh becoming the only non-Founding Father to author two amendments, the Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth, to the United States Constitution. The Twenty-fifth Amendment, ratified in 1967, clarified the process for the transition of power in the event of presidential and vice-presidential vacancies. The Twenty-sixth Amendment lowered the voting age to 21. Senator Bayh also authored Title IX of the Higher Education Act of 1965, which outlawed gender discrimination in education and school athletics; he authored the Bayh-Dole Act as well, which decentralized management of federally funded inventions out of Washington and into the hands of universities and small companies. Senator Bayh also was the author and chief sponsor of two other nearly-passed Constitutional amendments: The Equal Rights Amendment, and the Direct Popular Vote Amendment.

Senator Bayh was reelected in 1968 and 1974, and upon leaving the Senate continued his commitment to public service through a number of efforts, including as a member of the Fulbright Scholarship Board, Chairman of Chairman of the University of Virginia’s Miller Center Commission on Presidential Disability and the 25th Amendment and Membership

on the Center's Commission on Federal Judicial Selection; and Founding Chairman of the National Institute Against Prejudice and Violence.

On October 24, 2003, the federal courthouse in Indianapolis was named the Birch Bayh Federal Building and United States Courthouse, making the building one of only a handful across the nation named in honor of a living person. Then District Judge David F. Hamilton said,

Birch Bayh is one of a handful of leaders of his generation who helped inspire a generation of younger Americans, and especially younger Hoosiers, to commit themselves, as he did, to public service to build their lives around the belief that government can be a force to improve the lives of our fellow citizens. As you might guess, there are a few of us present today. Birch Bayh has not only inspired that younger generation, he continues to go out of his way to help them in their careers of service. For that we are all grateful, and that legacy of his Senate career will also echo for many years to come.

Flags at federal courthouses throughout the Southern District of Indiana were lowered to half-staff and will remain so through sunset on the day of Senator Bayh's funeral.