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It is with profound sadness that we report the passing of the Honorable Sterling Johnson, Jr. of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York on Monday, October 10, 2022. He was eighty-eight years old.

Nominated to the federal bench by President George H.W. Bush in 1991, Judge Johnson served as a District Judge for thirty-one years, maintaining an active docket of cases until 2021.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, on May 14, 1934, Judge Johnson grew up in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood with his parents, three sisters, and one brother. Upon graduating high school, Judge Johnson joined the U.S. Marine Corps in which he served for three years. He then returned to New York and joined the New York City Police Department in 1956.

Simultaneously, Judge Johnson began night school at Brooklyn College and obtained his bachelors' degree after eight years of part-time study while working as a police officer. He then went on to Brooklyn Law School and graduated among the top ten percent of his class in 1966.

In 1967, Judge Johnson joined the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York as an Assistant U.S. Attorney. Due to his exemplary work, he was appointed as the executive director of the Civilian Complaint Review Board, investigating allegations of police misconduct and brutality.

Judge Johnson was then named the executive liaison officer of the United States Drug Enforcement Administration. In 1975, he became the Special Narcotics Prosecutor for New York City, a position he held until his appointment to the federal bench in 1991. As the Special Narcotics Prosecutor, Judge Johnson supervised assistant district attorneys and investigators responsible for the prosecution of more than 7,000 criminal cases.

Following his appointment to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York ("EDNY"), Judge Johnson continued his involvement in law enforcement affairs by serving as a Commissioner of the United States Sentencing Commission from 1999 to 2002. In that role, Judge Johnson helped establish sentencing policies and practices for the federal judiciary and advised and assisted Congress and the Executive branch in the development of effective anti-crime policies.

Throughout his career, Judge Johnson used his extensive experience as a judge and in law enforcement to educate others. In the United States, he lectured at Harvard Law School (Guest Professor in Trial Advocacy Program), Hofstra Law School, Emory Law School, Rutgers Law School, St. John's Law School, Brooklyn Law School, New York Law School, New York University, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, the New York City Police Department Academy,

and Voice of America, Washington, D.C. Judge Johnson also lectured throughout the world, including in Pakistan, Italy, Argentina, Jamaica, Trinidad, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Barbados, Surinam, Guyana, Fiji, the Philippines, Thailand, the Virgin Islands, Malaysia, and Singapore.

Throughout his long career, Judge Johnson was a socially progressive force and an advocate for positive change. He was involved with the National Black Prosecutors Association, the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, the Presidential Drug Advisory Council, the Second Circuit Task Force on Gender, Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts, as well as the Task Force on Minorities in the Judiciary.

In addition to his towering achievements in the law, Judge Johnson will be remembered for his dedication to family, including his family of law clerks and his EDNY family; for his inexhaustible willingness to mentor others and share his wisdom; and for his welcoming persona. Judge Johnson had a steadfast commitment to justice, whether from the bench or in his various advocacy positions, and a deep sense of community and love for those around him. We all mourn his loss but will celebrate his myriad accomplishments and endeavor to embody his warm and loving attitude in our daily lives.

Judge Johnson was a lifelong civil servant; a devoted mentor; a loving colleague and cherished friend; a veteran; a pioneer in the law; a trailblazer and icon in the African-American community; and an irreplaceable member of the federal judiciary. He will be sorely missed.

Judge Johnson is survived by his wife Barbara Johnson; his son Sterling Johnson III and his wife Wendy Johnson; his daughter Jennifer Johnson; his son-in-law David Daniels, husband to his late daughter Alicia Daniels; his sister Muriel Gamble; and his grandchildren Jessica Barnes and Attiyya Akinwole.