

State of Mississippi Judiciary

April 18, 2024

Judge Jim M. Greenlee of Oxford has announced that he will retire from the Mississippi Court of Appeals on June 30.

“I have been privileged to serve our people, our state and our system of justice in this position for over eight years,” Judge Greenlee said in a recent letter to Gov. Tate Reeves.

“Furthermore, it has been a privilege to serve with my fellow Judges and our staff at the Mississippi Court of Appeals.”

The Governor will make an appointment to fill the vacancy. A special election is expected to be scheduled for November 2026.

Judge Greenlee said on Wednesday that he has enjoyed his work on the Court of Appeals. “It’s been a great privilege and honor to be here and work on these cases,” he said. “We are a Court that has to give our attention and focus on (appeals of) what occurred in the trial courts and the state agency administrative appeals.”

The 10-member Court of Appeals issued 321 decisions on the merits in 2023, and decided 1,550 motions and petitions.

The Mississippi Senate commended Judge Greenlee’s career, adopting Senate Resolution 80 honoring him on April 12. The resolution outlined his career and said, in part, “Judge Greenlee has served as a leader and mentor in the administration of justice in Mississippi, and consistently lectured on the professional

standards of the practice, including ethics, integrity, civility, courtesy and adherence to the Golden Rule. Judge Greenlee's career has honored both the Mississippi Bar and this great state that he served.”

Judge Greenlee has more than 42 years of government service, having served in the U.S. Navy and Naval Reserve, and as an Assistant U.S. Attorney and U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Mississippi before he joined the Court of Appeals.

President George W. Bush nominated him as U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Mississippi in 2001. He served as U.S. Attorney until 2010, leading an office which prosecuted public corruption cases, judicial influence cases, major drug distribution networks and violent gun crime cases. The office under Judge Greenlee’s leadership assisted in the cold case investigation of the murder of Emmett Till. As U. S. Attorney, he served on the Advisory Committee to the U.S. Attorney General.

He was an assistant U. S. Attorney in the Civil Division of the U. S. Attorney’s Office from 1987 until 2001. He became the lead civil fraud attorney, trying bankruptcy, tort, employment rights, eminent domain, and white-collar criminal cases.

He was in the private practice of law in Southaven from 1981 to 1987, and in Oxford from 2010 to 2016.

He grew up in Batesville and graduated from South Panola High School in 1970. Having been awarded a Navy ROTC

Scholarship, he earned his Bachelor of Engineering degree from the University of Mississippi in 1974. He served on active duty in the U. S. Navy from 1974 to 1978, assigned to the destroyers USS Stribling and USS Jonas Ingram. He served as First Lieutenant, Gunnery Officer and Navigator at different times, and was qualified as a Surface Warfare Officer. After completing active duty, he returned to the University of Mississippi to study law, earning a Juris Doctorate in 1981.

He continued his military service as a member of the U.S. Navy Reserve, commanding a Reserve Naval Intelligence Service unit, the forerunner of NCIS. He retired from the Navy Reserve in 1997 at the rank of Captain, USN.

Former Gov. Phil Bryant appointed Judge Greenlee to a vacancy on the Court of Appeals on Jan. 20, 2016, after former Court of Appeals Judge James D. Maxwell II of Oxford was appointed to the Supreme Court. Judge Greenlee was elected twice without opposition.

Judge Greenlee, 72, said that he looks forward to spending more time at home in Oxford with his wife of 49 years, Ann Veazey Greenlee, and with their two children's families. They have four grandchildren.

"Ann and I would like to do some things together, and I just think it's time," he said.

He doesn't have specific plans yet. "I intend to be active in my community and my church but will wait a while before I make any other decisions or commitments."