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STATEMENT OF FIRST CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS REGARDING PASSING OF JUDGE BRUCE M. SELYA

BOSTON (February 23, 2025)—The United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit mourns the passing of Judge Bruce M. Selya, who died on Saturday, February 22, 2025, at the age of 90. The Court of Appeals expresses deepest sympathy to Judge Selya's family, especially his wife, Cindy, and their two daughters, as well as their six grandchildren. Judge Selya was a member of the Court of Appeals for more than 38 years.

First Circuit Chief Judge David J. Barron said, "Bruce Selya's legacy will live on in his much-quoted opinions, which have shaped the law of our circuit in nearly every field. But it will also live on in the high standard that he set for appellate judging nationwide. His devotion to the job was unmatched, and his love for it an inspiration. His capacity to instill that love in the many new members of the court who came after him was a great gift not only for myself but for so many of my colleagues. He was a brilliant mind but also a generous spirit and our court — like the state and the country that he loved — was greatly enriched by his remarkable service on it."

Judge Sandra L. Lynch stated, "The country has lost a great man in the death of Judge Bruce Selya, as has this court. Bruce was wise, had uncommon insights, and was truly learned both in the law and in the lessons drawn from experiences. His high intelligence, astonishing memory, and ability to see what was important marked him as extraordinary, well before he became a judge. His influence and accomplishments were notable as a leader in his beloved Rhode Island. He thought deeply and his influential opinions, meant to structure the law, are much admired. He wrote distinctively, with prose reflecting the richness of the English language. He was my friend, and I mourn his passing."

"When I joined the court in 1998, Bruce Selya was already a legendary judge because of the brilliance of his opinions and his signature writing style. But I soon understood that these public gifts were only part of the story. Bruce's preparation for oral argument was extraordinary. He remembered everything he ever read. And his ability to crystallize issues for the benefit of colleagues, and to offer constructive criticism of our draft opinions, was matchless. He made all of our work better. Personally, Bruce was a delightful colleague — warm, witty, ever thoughtful. In particular, my wife Nancy and I had many wonderful times with Bruce and his lovely wife Cindy when we were together in Puerto Rico for court sittings. Nancy and I extend our deepest sympathy to Cindy and the entire Selya family. Bruce's passing is a great loss for our court and for us personally," remarked Judge Kermit V. Lipez.

Judge Jeffrey R. Howard stated, "Bruce Selya's legacy as one of the great American appellate judges will endure for a long time to come. But what the countless lawyers who learn the law from reading his erudite and clear-eyed opinions do not know is that Judge Selya was a mentor to nearly every federal appellate and trial judge in our circuit who came after him. I always felt that he was especially generous in sharing his time and wisdom with me, and I will miss him to pieces."

Judge O. Rogeriee Thompson said, "Judge Bruce Selya was a brilliant colleague whose influence on American jurisprudence cannot be underestimated. I was proud and honored to be the successor to his seat on the court, but I quivered, knowing that I was following in the footsteps of a legal giant. I will be forever grateful for all the knowledge and wisdom Judge Selya was gracious enough to share with me in his sincere desire to help me flourish in his wake. It goes without saying that we will all miss his towering spirit."

Judge William J. Kayatta, Jr., stated, "Within our small and collegial court, Bruce Selya will be fondly remembered for his incomparable graciousness. His emails invariably began with the word 'Dear' and ended with 'Best ever.' So, too, in person his every utterance conveyed a message of affection and respect. We will do well to keep his example in mind even as he leaves us."

"I had the privilege of appearing before Judge Selya and later sitting along him. He was a brilliant jurist, role model, and kind friend. His passion for the law and use of language was beyond inspirational. He was an esteemed colleague of the federal and commonwealth judiciary in Puerto Rico. Judge Selya's decades of service left a remarkable legacy of jurisprudence and interpretation of local law that will continue to define federal practice in Puerto Rico," stated Judge Gustavo A. Gelpi.

Judge Lara E. Montecalvo said, "Bruce Selya was a friend and mentor to me as I joined the court he loved, and I will always be grateful for his generosity and advice. He was a guiding light for many on our court but also to lawyers and judges in his home state of Rhode Island where he will be long remembered."

Judge Julie Rikelman remarked, "I will miss Judge Selya terribly. From my first days on the court, he was a warm and generous colleague, reaching out regularly to offer his support and mentorship. As he often said, he believed he had the best job in the world, and his devotion to the work of the court was and will continue to be an inspiration. I feel lucky to have had the chance to serve with him."

Judge Seth R. Aframe said, "As a law clerk in another chambers, I was awed by Judge Selya's intellect and ability. As a frequent litigant in his court, I revered his mastery of oral argument and marveled at his appreciation for the nuance of every case. And as a colleague, I was so honored to receive his wisdom and friendship. Like for thousands of lawyers, Judge Selya taught me about intellectual rigor, clear expression, and the search for justice. Our court, our region, and our nation are better off because Judge Selya served us with such distinction. His vast body of work demonstrates his enduring commitment to the rule of law. We will miss him very much."

Judge Selya was the longest serving Rhode Islander on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit. Judge Selya, a lifelong resident of Providence, was born on May 27, 1934, and attended Providence public schools, prior to attending Harvard College, where he earned a B.A. *magna*

cum laude in 1955, and Harvard Law School, where he received a J.D. *cum laude* in 1958. He was admitted to the Rhode Island Bar in 1960. Immediately following law school, Judge Selya clerked for Chief Judge Edward W. Day of the United States District Court for the District of Rhode Island for two years, before entering private practice. He was a judge on the Lincoln Probate Court in Rhode Island from 1965 to 1972. In 1982, Judge Selya was appointed a U.S. District Court Judge for the District of Rhode Island, and, in 1986, he was elevated to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit. Judge Selya took senior status in 2006 and continued to hear cases on the First Circuit Court Appeals as a senior judge until his passing. He also served on the Judicial Panel for Multidistrict Litigation and as Chief of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court of Review.

Judge Selya was dedicated to the Rhode Island community in numerous capacities. For example, he was a member of the board of trustees of Rhode Island Hospital and was the founding chairman of the board of directors of Lifespan, Rhode Island's first health system. Judge Selya was a governor and trustee emeritus of Rhode Island Hospital and a member of the Rhode Island Commodores, the Rhode Island Historical Society, and the Rhode Island School of Design Museum. He was also a chairman of the board of trustees of Bryant University and chairman of the board of directors of Roger Williams University School of Law. In addition to his judicial duties, Judge Selya was actively involved in the teaching of law, and held faculty appointments at Boston College Law School, Boston University School of Law, and Roger Williams University School of Law.