

The Speaker, on behalf of the entire House of Representatives, offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 217.

A resolution honoring the life of Judge Susan Bieke Neilson.

Whereas, In 1980, Susan Bieke Neilson began her distinguished career after graduating cum laude with a law degree from Wayne State University. Susan practiced law, first as an associate and later as a partner, with the prestigious Detroit firm, Dickenson, Wright. During her eleven years with the firm, she specialized in products liability claims, medical malpractice claims, and commercial litigation; and

Whereas, Susan B. Neilson was appointed to the Third Judicial Circuit Court of Michigan in 1991 and was re-elected three times. Judge Neilson obtained significant experience on Michigan's largest state trial court bench, serving in both the civil and the criminal divisions; and

Whereas, Judge Neilson was dedicated to the improvement of the law by writing numerous articles, as well as co-edited and authored a two-volume treatise entitled, Michigan Civil Procedure. The Michigan Judicial Institute selected the treatise to purchase for every trial court judge in the state and the State Bar of Michigan awarded the treatise its prestigious "Plain English Award," due to its remarkable clarity; and

Whereas, Judge Neilson was nominated and confirmed to serve on the Federal Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals in November of 2005. She was the only active female judge from Michigan on the Sixth Circuit during her tenure; and

Whereas, Judge Nielson was committed to numerous community activities. She was a leader and past president of Soroptimist International of Grosse Pointe, an international service organization dedicated to improving the lives of women and girls. She was a member of the Catholic Lawyers Society and was an involved parishioner at St. Philomenas Church in Detroit; and

Whereas, Judge Neilson was a lifelong resident of Michigan. She was born in Ann Arbor, raised in Portage, and a long-time resident of Grosse Pointe Woods. She received many accolades from friends, family, and professional acquaintances, including warm sentiments regarding her skills as a trial lawyer, fairness in judgments, role model for women, true friend, loving wife, and adoring mother. She is survived by her two daughters, Elizabeth and Mary, husband of 25 years, Jeffrey, parents Ronald and Shiela Bieke, two brothers and a sister; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That members of this legislative body honor the life of Judge Susan Bieke Neilson. She was a gentle, brilliant woman who loved her family, community, and the law. Furthermore, everyone whose life she touched was enriched from having known and loved her; and be it further

Resolved, That the members of this legislative body honor her exceptional career on the bench and outstanding commitment to justice; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the family of Susan Bieke Neilson as a token of our esteem.