

## **Resume in Support of the Nomination of the Honorable James Lawrence King, Senior U.S. District Judge**

James Lawrence King began his journey from humble beginnings, born on Dec. 20, 1927, just 29 blocks from the courthouse that bears his name. Like everyone from his generation, he will tell you he was born in “Miamah” and raised in a small home down in “the Redlands” deep in South Dade County. His early life experiences clearly shaped his life and his future judicial philosophy—treating all whom he meets or who appear before him fairly and respectfully.

After graduating college in 1949, Judge King intended to become a teacher at Palatka High School, but a trip to the Florida Legislature and encouragement from the school’s principal to become a lawyer led him to the law, and he graduated from the University of Florida School of Law in 1953. He served on active duty as a first lieutenant in the Judge Advocate General Department of the United States Air Force during the Korean War and tried over 200 court martials. In 1955, he began practicing civil law in Miami with Sibley, Grusmark, Barkdoll, & King and eventually was elected in 1964 to the Miami Dade County Circuit Court, where he served until 1970, when he and Judge Peter T. Fay were appointed United States District Judges. Since then, Judge King has authored more than 1,020 reported decisions and has sentenced more than 6,200 individuals in criminal cases. He has served as chief judge and has been instrumental in helping to build three federal courthouses in Miami. These facts are just a few of the reasons his lifelong friend and colleague, Judge Fay, now of the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals, remarks that “few people have given more service to our country than Judge Larry King.” Judge King has been working nonstop and with a full case load for 50 years on the federal bench — even since he took senior status in 1992. He received the highest honor a federal judge can receive in the form of the prestigious Devitt Award, an award given to only a handful of district judges.

The essence of Judge King’s legal philosophy, the cornerstone of what has guided him in his long career is clear and simple: pursue justice for the litigants, the lawyers, and respect the rule of law. “My job is to keep a level playing field,” as he has often declared. “If there is any prejudice, then I am not fulfilling my responsibility.” It is this pursuit of justice and fairness that has kept Judge King fresh and still looking forward to coming to work every day.

Those who practice before Judge King appreciate his commitment to justice. He gives the litigants the full opportunity to present their arguments to the court, while he skillfully and efficiently moves the cases to resolution. To that inevitable question posed to those who continue to work as they approach 90 years of age (“Why do you still do this instead of sit in the mountains of North Carolina?”), his answer is simple: “Well, the lawyers, the lawyers, the lawyers are great; I love lawyers.” The lawyers and his colleagues feel the same way about Judge King. Former Florida Bar President and ABA President Steve Zack reminds us: “The one constant in the legal profession in South Florida has been and continues to be the presence and guidance of Judge James Lawrence King, and we are better because of it. He has set standards that we all strive to achieve.” Another lawyer who frequently appears before Judge King, echoes those sentiments: “Judge King is fair; always well prepared; smart and treats lawyers, clients and witnesses with dignity.”

Former Florida Bar President Tod Aronovitz, whose father, J. Sidney Aronovitz, was a colleague of Judge King's, recalls, "My first federal court trial, 35 years ago, was before Judge King. He was dedicated, conscientious and fair to all. It is my belief that one of the reasons that my late father and Judge King had such a strong friendship was due to their commitment to the Rule of Law." Yet for all his success and accomplishment, what he is most proud of is his close and incredible family. He and his late wife, Mary King, were married for over 50 years. Judge King is proud of his four children, Larry King, Kathy Wright, Karen Colbert and Mary "Jena" King. He has been blessed with 11 grandchildren with whom he loves to spend time. Judge Fay reflected on Judge King's career and family life and their lifelong friendship: "Larry's life has been devoted to his God, his family and his country. For well over 50 years, he has served in the judiciary as a role model for all. He has been my friend for well over 60 years, and I consider his friendship as one of my treasures."

After nearly 50 years on the federal bench, Judge King's service to the federal judiciary is remarkable.

The following reflects Judge King's exceptional judicial experience and deep commitment to our profession.

U.S. Air Force, J.A.G., 1953–1955  
Partner, Sibley, Grusmark, Barkdull & King  
Recipient, 18th Annual Edward J. Devitt Distinguished Service to Justice Award  
President of the State Junior Bar and Board of Governors of the Florida Bar  
Board of Control of Florida  
Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Judicial Circuit  
Appointed United States District Judge for the Southern District of Florida, October 30, 1970  
Appointed by Chief Justice to serve on several committees of the Judicial Conference of the United States, including Committee on Judicial Activities  
Special Committee to implement the U.S. Magistrates System through study and report upon the Master System and English Civil Judicial Procedures of the British High Court in London  
Committee on the Judicial Code  
Committee on Standards for Admission of Attorneys to Federal Practice (Devitt Committee)  
Chairman, Implementation Committee on Admission of Attorneys to Federal Practice  
Ad Hoc Advisory Committee for the U.S. Administrative Office  
Committee on Long Range Planning, 1990–1996  
President, Fifth Circuit Judges Association; appointed Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court for Panama Canal Zone, 1978–1979  
Judicial Conference of the United States, 1984–1987  
Judicial Council of the Eleventh Circuit  
Chief Judge, Southern District of Florida, 1984–1991  
Honorary Doctor of Humanities, St. Thomas University

Law school commencement speaker at the University of Florida and St. Thomas University  
Congress named the United States Courthouse in Miami as the James Lawrence King  
Federal Justice Building