Statement from Chief Justice Cornelia A. Clark regarding the passing of former Chief Justice Adolpho A. Birch, Jr.:

“We are extremely saddened to learn of the passing of former Chief Justice Adolpho A. Birch, Jr. Our judicial family has lost a great leader, champion of justice, and dear friend. A true pioneer in many arenas, Justice Birch has left an indelible mark on the Tennessee judiciary and the entire legal system.

“As the only judge who ever served at every level of our legal system, Justice Birch had a keen understanding of the law, the judiciary and the people he served. That perspective served him well on the Supreme Court, especially in his role as chief justice. For his entire judicial career he continued to blaze trails to insure justice and access to the courts for all persons.

“I was very privileged to serve with Justice Birch on the Court during the last year of his tenure and to have my office around the corner from his. I often sought his advice and counsel. He never hesitated to stop what he was doing and answer my questions, and I benefitted greatly from his wisdom and patience. I was proud to call him my colleague and my friend.

“Justice Birch served the state of Tennessee with extraordinary dignity and integrity and we will miss him dearly.”

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