



MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Justice Robert P. Young, Jr. Announces Retirement

Says return of decorum to the Court a top accomplishment

LANSING, MI, March 29, 2017 – Michigan Supreme Court Justice Robert P. Young, Jr. announced his retirement today during a meeting with fellow Justices of the Supreme Court. His retirement will be effective April 30 or earlier as he winds up his affairs on the Court. He will be returning to his former law firm of Dickinson Wright.

“After more than 20 years in the judiciary, with 18 on the Supreme Court, I have decided that it’s time for me to take on the next chapter of my career. I am proud of what I have accomplished, especially while serving as Chief Justice. At the time I joined the Court, it was marked by acrimony. When I became Chief Justice, we proved that good people who may differ in their opinions can come together and accomplish important things for the people we serve – and we do it amicably,” Young said.

Young served 3 years on the Michigan Court of Appeals and 18 on the Michigan Supreme Court, including 6 years as Chief Justice. During that time, Young said the Court focused on improving service to the public by measuring performance, streamlining processes, and utilizing technology to cut costs and better serve people. It was also a time of eliminating wasteful bureaucracy and even reducing the number of judges throughout the state where there was declining workload.

“I will be returning to the firm that opened its arms to me 30 years ago. I look forward to focusing on an appellate practice at Dickinson Wright and helping grow this part of the firm,” Young continued. “I will be forever grateful for the opportunity to serve the people of Michigan, but I’ve always believed that sometimes you just know when it’s time to move on to another challenge.”

Under Young, the Michigan Supreme Court emphasized respect for the Rule of Law and the role of the judiciary in a constitutional republic. That reputation and legacy has been recognized nationally, including notable comments in the *Wall Street Journal* praising its traditional view of the judicial role.

Young highlighted what he described as “some simple, but very important things were accomplished by making the public our first priority.” These include:

- Reducing the size of the judiciary to fit our declining workload and thereby saving taxpayers over \$15 million so far.
- Imposing performance standards on every judge and every court in order to improve our services.

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- Surveying the public who come to our courts. The surveys have shown a consistently high level of satisfaction, with the public saying they were treated with respect and their cases were handled fairly and in a timely basis.
- Expanding the number of “problem solving” courts to address specific issues facing veterans and those having problems with alcohol and drugs. The results show reduced return offenders and an increased rate of employment for those involved in court programs.
- Using technology to permit online traffic ticket review and virtual prisoner transports. This has significantly reduced costs, increased efficiency, and helped keep the public and law enforcement safer.
- And introducing one of the nation’s best and most used online legal help systems to provide assistance to those who do not have lawyers.

“Government doesn’t have to be broken and it doesn’t have to be toxic. I believe we showed that in recent years on the Michigan Supreme Court, and I’m extremely proud of the role I played. I also have a deep amount of respect for my fellow Justices and have appreciated their support throughout the years,” Young concluded.

Several Justices have left the Court prior to the end of their term. In recent years, Maura Corrigan, Conrad Mallett, Elizabeth Weaver, Dennis Archer, and Mary Beth Kelly left before their terms were completed.

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Note: for official Court questions, please contact John Nevin (517) 373-0129. For non-official questions, please contact John Truscott (517) 487-9320.