



The Trustees and staff of The Fund for New Jersey honor the legacy of our longtime Trustee Judge John Gibbons, who died December 9, 2018. We extend our deepest condolences to Judge Gibbons' family, including his four daughters, three sons, sister, brother, and their families.

Judge Gibbons served as a Trustee of The Fund for New Jersey for 45 years, from its origins in 1970 to 2015, including serving as Vice-President from 1978 to 1996. He shaped The Fund's focus from the beginning and his leadership contributed enormously to The Fund's decision-making. His extraordinary intellect paired with his commitment to civil rights yielded tremendous advances in New Jersey public policy.

After an active career in the private bar, Judge Gibbons was nominated by President Richard Nixon to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, which he joined in 1970 and where he served for 20 years, the last three as chief judge. During this time he authored more than 800 opinions. After he left the bench he rejoined his former firm, Crummy, Del Deo, Dolan, Giffinger, and Vecchione, which would later become Gibbons P.C. At that time the firm established the John J. Gibbons Fellowship in Public Interest and Constitutional Law, which housed two full-time attorneys who worked on public interest and constitutional law issues including marriage equality, racial profiling, and equitable public school funding.

Judge Gibbons influenced public policy in New Jersey on a wide range of issues from education and criminal justice reform to housing and environment. Perhaps more than any other issue, ending capital punishment was the focus of Judge Gibbons' work. He served as a member of the executive committee of New Jerseyans for an Alternative to the Death Penalty, and was successful in 2007 in abolishing the death penalty. He was honored as Lawyer of the Year by the New Jersey Law Journal in 2004, received the Lifetime Achievement Award from The American Lawyer in 2005, and was named one of the 100 Most Influential Lawyers in America by The National Law Journal in 2006. He was past president of the New Jersey State Bar Association; life member of the American Law Institute; and Fellow of the American Bar Association. He previously served as member of House of Delegates of the American Bar Association and chair of its Committee on Fair Trial and Free Press; director of the American Arbitration Association; and trustee and trustee emeritus of the Practicing Law Institute.

Judge Gibbons was a role model and a mentor, both admired and loved by his friends and colleagues. We at The Fund are grateful to have worked with him, learned from him, and joined him in his work to make New Jersey – and the country – a place in which ideals of justice and humanity were made real and meaningful for all residents. He will be missed by all of us at The Fund for New Jersey.