

Former Chief Justice Eric Brown (chairperson of the Steering Committee of the Ohio Coalition for Equity and Adequacy of School Funding/Vouchers Hurt Ohio (VHO)) honored February 11 during the unveiling of his portrait in the chambers of the Ohio Supreme Court.

The program featuring the unveiling of Judge Brown's portrait was very professional and moving. Attached is the [February 13 issue](#) of Court News Ohio which identifies the flow of this prestigious event. The portrait can be viewed [here](#).

As Judge Brown chairs the Coalition/VHO Steering Committee, it is conspicuously obvious that his legal expertise is most valuable as the Steering Committee works with the legal team in the lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the EdChoice voucher scheme.

Dedication to Service Highlighted During Former Chief Justice Portrait Presentation

By [Dan Trevas](#) | February 13, 2025

Former Chief Justice Eric S. Brown honored at portrait presentation ceremony.

His service as chief justice of the Ohio Supreme Court was brief, but his time dedicated to ensuring justice has spanned decades and continues today.

After the unexpected death of Chief Justice Thomas J. Moyer in 2010, then Gov. Ted Strickland needed to appoint a replacement. The governor turned to Franklin County Probate Court Judge Eric S. Brown, knowing his background in public service and political courage.

"The unfortunate timing of Chief Justice Moyer's death placed me in the position of appointing a new chief justice to serve until the end of that term. I knew that Eric's character and demeanor were ideal for leading Ohio's courts and the legal profession. I admired his dedication to public education and the various issues that were likely to come before this court," former Gov. Strickland said.

The former governor was among those who unveiled a portrait of former Chief Justice Brown during a ceremony at the Ohio Supreme Court. Former Chief Justice Brown was accompanied by his family, including his wife and their two daughters.

Former Gov. Strickland recognized the entire family for their dedication to public service.

"His wife, Marilyn, served as a Franklin County commissioner for multiple terms, and their daughter Beryl was sworn in as a member of the Ohio House of Representatives," he said. "This family's dedication to public service runs deep. And their actions inspire all of us."

Former Chief Justice Brown served nine months in the role and was not elected to serve another term. However, his time in public service didn't end. He went on to serve eight years as a member of the Columbus City School Board of Education.

"When I entered the legal profession, I never imagined that I would one day serve as a chief justice of this court," former Chief Justice Brown said. "In fact, my professional dreams never touched on being elected to the bench or earning the highest billable hour. I was motivated by the opportunity to help people whose lives would benefit from sound legal advice."

Former Chief Justice Brown noted his true intent when joining the legal profession was focused on community-level engagement and ensuring that anyone in his hometown of Cleveland could have the assistance of a lawyer when they needed one. However, he added he was proud to be part of the Supreme Court and proclaimed that the Court has "played an essential role in shaping the progress of the Buckeye State."

The ceremony was led by Justice Jennifer Brunner, who knew the former chief justice since she became a practicing attorney in the 1990s. She noted that his career included serving as an assistant attorney general, a magistrate and judge, and a school board member before and after holding judicial posts.

“The service that Eric has given our community, and our state, is really beyond what I think any of us have seen because we’ve known Eric in so many different roles and walks of life. But when you wrap it all together, this is a person who says when some help is needed, ‘I’ll be there,’” she said.

On behalf of the Thomas J. Moyer Foundation, Chief Justice Sharon L. Kennedy accepted the portrait painted by Gregory Gibson, a retired attorney who has painted several portraits of prominent judges.

“Today, as we unveil his portrait, we reflect on the principles and the values he stood for,” Chief Justice Kennedy said. “May his portrait remind us and future generations that he is among those who make an enduring commitment to serving the citizens of our great state.”

In his closing remarks, former Chief Justice Brown sounded the alarm of Ohio's significant challenge in providing access to justice for all its residents, especially in rural areas where a shortage of attorneys makes it difficult for people to receive adequate legal assistance. He challenged the next generation of Ohioans to answer the call to fulfill Ohio’s legal needs.

“I issue this challenge to high school and college students across this great state. Make a difference in the lives of others. Go to law school, earn a degree, then return home to help those in urgent need of legal counsel. Few professions are as deeply rewarding as ours,” he concluded.