

THE HONORABLE NEAL E. KRAVITZ
ASSOCIATE JUDGE
SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Neal E. Kravitz has served as a judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia since his appointment in 1998 by President Bill Clinton. He is currently in his second fifteen-year term on the court, having been reappointed in 2013 following a unanimous “well-qualified” finding by the District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure. He is a graduate of Yale College (1979) and Harvard Law School (1983).

Judge Kravitz began his legal career in 1983 as a law clerk to The Honorable Henry A. Politz of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. Judge Kravitz then joined the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia in 1984 as a staff attorney. For six years, Judge Kravitz represented indigent criminal defendants and juvenile respondents in all stages of the criminal process in the District of Columbia Courts. He was lead defense counsel in more than twenty Superior Court jury trials involving indigent defendants charged with murder, rape, armed robbery, and other serious offenses, and he briefed and argued more than ten criminal cases in the Court of Appeals.

Judge Kravitz left the Public Defender Service in early 1990 to become the Executive Director of the New Hampshire Public Defender, a statewide public defender program with fifty lawyers in six offices across New Hampshire. As Executive Director, Judge Kravitz managed and directed the daily activities of New Hampshire’s public defender program, represented the interests of indigent defendants before the state legislature, and litigated complex trial and appellate matters in the state’s courts.

Judge Kravitz returned to the District of Columbia in late 1991 and accepted a position as Special Investigative Counsel to the United States Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs. The committee investigated and held public hearings concerning allegations that the governments of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia failed to release all American prisoners of war still alive in captivity at the end of the Vietnam War.

Judge Kravitz joined the Washington Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs as a staff attorney in early 1993. There, he was co-lead counsel for six African-American Secret Service officers who sued the Denny’s Restaurant chain on behalf of a nationwide class alleging a corporate practice of racial discrimination against African-American customers. His clients won a landmark settlement against Denny’s consisting of extensive injunctive relief and a then-record monetary award ultimately shared by more than 100,000 class members.

Judge Kravitz returned to Capitol Hill in 1994 to serve as the Principal Deputy Democratic Special Counsel to the Senate Whitewater Committee. He participated in all aspects of the committee’s investigation, including the questioning of senior White House officials and other witnesses at public hearings and depositions.

Judge Kravitz left the Senate in early 1997 to accept an appointment at the United States Department of Justice as Counsel to the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. In this

position, Judge Kravitz assisted the head of the Civil Rights Division in coordinating the federal government's law enforcement response to hate crimes, church arsons, and acts of violence committed against providers of reproductive health services. Judge Kravitz remained as Counsel to the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights until his appointment to the Superior Court.

Judge Kravitz has presided over cases in the Superior Court's Civil, Criminal, and Family Divisions and has sat by designation in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. He is the Chair of the Language Access Advisory Committee and a member of the Standing Committee on Fairness and Access to the District of Columbia Courts, the Superior Court Rules Committee, and the Landlord-Tenant Advisory Rules Subcommittee.