

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 27, 2011

**ESSEX COUNTY FREEHOLDERS
HONOR THE LATE JUDGE THOMAS M. “Tim” McCORMACK
DURING POIGNANT CEREMONY**

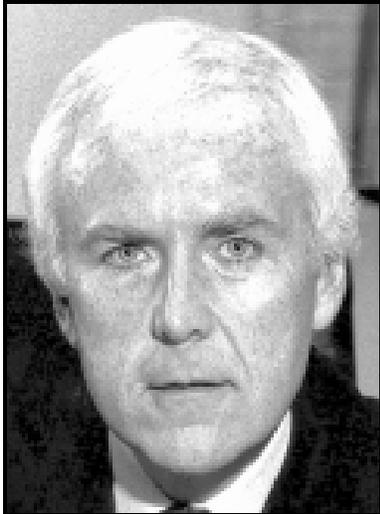
**Current & Former Freeholders Gather to Offer Condolences to the McCormack Family
And to Reminisce About their Late Friend, Former Freeholder
And Long-Time Counsel to the Board of Freeholders**

(Newark, NJ) – During a poignant ceremony that often brought participants and audience members to both laughter and tears, the Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders remembered the late Essex County Superior Court Judge Thomas M. McCormack of Roseland. The ceremony was held during the Board’s Wednesday, October 26, 2011, meeting at the Hall of Records, when Judge McCormack’s widow, Kay, and their children, Melissa and Michael, were presented with the Board’s In Memoriam resolution honoring the late judge, former freeholder and long-time counsel to the Board, who passed away in June.



Freeholder President Blonnie R. Watson (4th from right) presented Mrs. Kay McCormack of Roseland with the Board’s In Memoriam Resolution honoring her late husband, Essex County Superior Court Judge Thomas M. McCormack. Mrs. McCormack was accompanied by her children, Melissa and Michael (1st and 2nd from left). Also participating in the presentation were (from right to left) Freeholder Vice President Ralph R. Caputo, Essex County Surrogate Joseph P. Brennan, Jr., and former Freeholder Linda Lordi Cavanaugh. (Photo by Glen Frieson)

“On Friday, June 24th of this year, we lost a dear friend and colleague, Thomas M. McCormack”, said Freeholder President Blonnie R. Watson as she opened the ceremony. “Tonight”, she continued, “we are happy for this opportunity to celebrate his life and honor his memory, to offer our sincere and heartfelt condolences to the McCormack family, and to acknowledge just how special he was to the County of Essex.” Stating a theme that was repeated frequently throughout the ceremony, she went on to say, “Perhaps more than anyone else, when you think of the Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders in an historical context, the first name that comes to mind for those who *really* know how county government works, is “Tim McCormack”... because that’s how important he was in the evolution of the Board into what it is today.”



Hon. Thomas M. McCormack

Judge McCormack, known affectionately to his friends and colleagues as “Tim” or “Timmy”, was born and raised in the Vailsburg section of Newark, where he attended Sacred Heart Parish School and Seton Hall Prep before graduating from Newark State College in 1969. He attended Seton Hall Law School while working as an Investigator under then-Essex County Prosecutor Joseph P. Lordi, graduated in 1974, and went into private practice with the Newark law firm of McGlynn, McGlynn and McCormack. He continued his private practice in various partnerships until his appointment to the Superior Court of New Jersey, Essex Vicinage, in December of 2001, where he served in the Criminal, Civil and Family divisions until his passing.

During his years in private practice, Judge McCormack also served as a Freeholder in 1978, and as counsel to the Essex

sition Team, which was responsible for drafting the initial Administrative Code of Essex County and the By-Laws of the Board of Chosen Freeholders after voters approved the change in the form of County Government to the current County Executive Plan under New Jersey’s Optional County Charter Law in 1978. After the Code’s adoption on May 1, 1979, Mr. McCormack was appointed the first Counsel to the Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders, a position he held until 1992. In that role, he guided the Board through its infancy over uncharted ground, refining its powers and responsibilities in case law through countless critical lawsuits, while at the same time establishing himself as one of the most knowledgeable and highly-respected freeholder board counsels in New Jersey. Among his most notable achievements as Freeholder Counsel, McCormack served as the County’s lead attorney in its successful landmark lawsuit against the State of New Jersey that resulted in the State takeover of the onerous staffing costs associated with running the Superior Court. His expertise, acknowledged by all, was officially recognized by this ascension to the position of President of the County Freeholder Counsels’ Association.

The October 26th ceremony was hosted by Freeholder President Blonnie R. Watson, Freeholder Vice President Ralph R. Caputo, and the other seven current members of the Board, who offered laudatory remarks about Judge McCormack and condolences to his family. The program also included heartwarming reminiscences by former freeholder Linda Lordi Cavanaugh and the current

Essex County Surrogate, Joseph P. Brennan, Jr., both of whom served as McCormack's Deputy Freeholder Counsels, as well as by Freeholder Budget Consultant Frank McEnerney. As a further tribute to him, the audience also included many friends and colleagues who served with McCormack during his 13 years as Freeholder Counsel: former freeholder presidents Assemblyman Thomas P. Giblin and Joseph C. Parlavecchio; former freeholders James A. Cavanaugh, Leroy Jones and current Essex County Register Philip Thigpen; former freeholder clerk Daniel Gibson; former public relations consultant Tom Barrett; former county administrator Joseph A. Martin, the current Verona township manager; as well as Superior Court Judge Michael A. Petrolle, who was McCormack's law partner while both were in private practice.



The Essex County Freeholder Board Family gathers to honor the late Judge "Tim" McCormack and offer condolences to his family, seated in the *front row*: Mrs. Kay McCormack (center), son Michael and daughter Melissa. *2nd row* (left to right) are: Freeholder D. Bilal Beasley, former freeholder president Joseph C. Parlavecchio, Freeholder President Blonnie R. Watson, Freeholder Patricia Sebold, Freeholder Vice President Ralph R. Caputo, former freeholder Leroy Jones and former freeholder Linda Lordi Cavanaugh. *3rd row* (left to right) are: former public relations consultant Tom Barrett, Freeholder Budget Consultant Frank McEnerney, Essex County Surrogate Joseph P. Brennan, Jr., Freeholder Leonard M. Luciano and former freeholder clerk Daniel Gibson. *Back row* (left to right) are: Essex County Counsel and former freeholder James R. Paganelli, Freeholder Rolando Bobadilla, Freeholder Rufus I. Johnson, Freeholder Carol Y. Clark, Assemblyman and former freeholder president Thomas P. Giblin, former freeholder James A. Cavanaugh and Freeholder Donald M. Payne, Jr. (Photo by Glen Frieson)

Former freeholder Linda Lordi Cavanaugh of West Orange recounted her personal connection to Tim McCormack by explaining that they'd shared strong ties to the Vailsburg section of Newark,

where they both grew up. She also noted that Tim began his career with Essex County as an Investigator under her late father, Joseph P. Lordi, when he was Essex County Prosecutor, and that



Former Freeholder
Linda Lordi Cavanaugh



Essex County Surrogate
Joseph P. Brennan, Jr.

he later became *her* boss, early in her legal career, when she was a Deputy Freeholder Counsel. She spoke about his close relationship with his wife, Kay, his pride in his children, Melissa and Michael, his great sense of humor, and how “...everyone was Tim’s friend. You *wanted* to be his friend, because he was a great friend to have.” She also explained how well-deserved and fitting it was to honor him, “...because of the time (he) devoted to this freeholder board, the time he spent in these chambers, and the impact he had on this form of government and the County as a whole.” Commenting further on his legacy, Cavanaugh said, “There *was* no County Executive form of government in those days, so if you go back and look at any of the case law, Tim is in all of it because he was creating something new... and he helped to shape this into what it is today.”

Essex County Surrogate Joseph P. Brennan, Jr., reminisced about their days together as members of the Young Democrats of Essex County and of their mutual involvement in the Irish-American community when he and McCormack served as legal counsels, respectively, to the West Orange and Newark St. Patrick’s Day parades committees. Regarding McCormack’s tenure as Freeholder Counsel, Brennan recalled his calm demeanor and resolve during the early days of the new form of government when the Freeholder Counsel’s office was inundated with so many lawsuits that ultimately defined the role of the Freeholder Board and checked the authority of the County Executive, often through legal arguments that reached the New Jersey Supreme Court. “In all of the law that is written about the County Executive form of government,” said Brennan, “you will see that Tim either argued or assisted on those cases... so each of you freeholders owes Tim McCormack a debt of gratitude for that tenacity, that legal acumen, that got you to be a co-equal branch of government.”

Frank McEnerney, the Board’s current and longtime budget consultant, who also served during Tim McCormack’s tenure as Freeholder Counsel, recalled the good times he, Joe Brennan and McCormack enjoyed while working together as Board staff members. “We worked hard”, said McEnerney, “but we also shared a lot of laughs both during and following Board meetings.” He described a “game” he, Brennan and McCormack would often play to amuse themselves during meetings: “At the beginning of the night”, said McEnerney, “we would pick a word, whether the name of someone in the room or a location like Fargo, North Dakota, and then we would see who could get that word on the record the most during the meeting...” as part of their otherwise serious discourse. “It was just a funny thing we did to entertain ourselves, but it was in keeping with Tim’s

great sense of humor, and of how much fun it was just to be around him. I miss him, and I miss those times when he was here.”

The ceremony concluded with the presentation of the Board’s resolution to the McCormack family. “On behalf of the entire Board,” said Freeholder President Watson, “please accept our sincere condolences on your loss, as well as this Resolution as a token of the great respect we will always have for your husband, Tim.”

“I would like to thank everybody in this room from the bottom of my heart”, said Kay McCormack. “My husband, I *know*, would be delighted with the memories and the words that you shared.” She commented that her husband loved Essex County and the Board of Freeholders, adding, “We never left Essex County in all the 40 years we were married!” She went on to say, “There were so many memories, and this is an honor I know we will cherish... your words, for bringing this together, but most especially the memories and the relationships that were crafted through all of those years. Thank you.”



Mrs. Kay McCormack of Roseland (right) thanked the Board for their presentation honoring her late husband, Judge Thomas M. “Tim” McCormack, on behalf of herself and her children, Melissa and Michael. (Photo by Glen Frieson)

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