

**Remarks of Chief Justice John T. Broderick, Jr. at 2010 Annual Meeting
June 26, 2010**

Chief Justice Broderick was presented with the Justice William Grimes Award for Judicial Professionalism at the 2010 NHBA Annual Meeting on June 26. (The selection had been made a month before Broderick's announcement of his decision to step down from the bench on Nov. 30 of this year.)

The following are notes made from his remarks at the Annual Meeting:

[NHBA President James J. Tenn] asked me if I would make a few remarks and I am happy to do that. There are two ways to leave a job like mine, and both of them involve God. One of them is "Thank God, he's leaving," and the other is: "My God, he's leaving!"

To set the record straight, I am leaving because it is time. In my life and in family's life. It has nothing to do with recent events, nothing whatsoever to do with the budget. As I said to someone recently, I am like a Dalmatian in the firehouse. I love jumping on the trucks when the fires are called, and I will be willing to again, but it is time.

I am very honored to receive the Grimes award. I knew Justice Grimes when I was a lawyer and he was a judge. And then for a brief time when I was on the supreme court. And I never realized the breadth of his influence until I traveled the nation, and people would talk to me about Justice Grimes. He stopped me after a year on the court and said, "Young man," –I liked that actually – "You are doing a good job, but your opinions are too long." I believe he was half right—my opinions were too long.

I want to thank a few people here tonight. I have been on court for 15 years this November and the person who is most responsible for that is my wife Patti. My family over the last seven years has had some bumps as many families have, but I don't know a stronger, more courageous loving person than Patti Broderick and I would not be here for 15 years if it had not been for her.

When I became the chief justice in 2004, I had four objectives: One was to restore the relationship the best I could between the Bar and the bench. I think we have made real progress and I don't take credit for it. Jim Tenn has done an extraordinary job in the past year and Marilyn McNamara will be a very strong leader.

My second goal was to restore relationships across the river [with the legislature and the governor's office] and having been there in some tough times, I think we have made genuine progress. Again I don't take credit. That goes to a lot of people.

I also have been focused on preparing the courts, and to some extent, preparing the profession for the change that the 21st century is demanding from all of us...unprecedented change. I believe we are making progress.

Lastly it was my goal, and that of my colleagues on the court and the other courts in this state, to make the courts more accessible and understandable for all of our people. And unless and until we can say with pride that is the reality on the ground, it needs to be Job #1 every day for judges and lawyers alike.

Over my time in Concord, I have been involved in budgets. Now the challenge is different, fundamentally different, and that's where all of you come in. In the years I have

been going to the legislature, it's always been about money. How much money would we be getting? How much money would someone else is getting? How much money can the state afford? What were our needs? In the last session of the legislature, through no one's fault, there has been a sea change. Which I hope everyone in this room accepts. When I had a chance to speak to a joint session of House and Senate finance this spring, I said the more I come into this building, the more people tell me, we can't afford to keep the courts open every day. We can't afford to keep the courts open every day. That's a math statement. A math statement I disagree with, but nevertheless a math statement.

People have stopped talking about values in the budget process. Let me give you the values statement on the courts. The values statement is we cannot afford, as a free nation, to close the courts for a single day. That's the values statement (applause.)

For the first time in 15 years, increasingly the courts budget is seen as discretionary money. Surely there is a better way to do this, and I am sure there is and we are working on it.

The next budget cycle, according to Governor Lynch – and he has told me as much face-to-face, the next two years of the budget cycle will be unlike any other time in the history of this state --perhaps including the Depression. I am not sure they closed the courts in the Depression. I am sure we will be asked in the next cycle by the governor to reduce our budget further, as will every department in state government.

These are times when our voices need to be heard. These are times when, a generation from now, they will look to you and say, what were you doing? What did you say, what did you add? I may not be chief justice after November, but I will always be a New Hampshire lawyer and I intend to do all I can to be heard. I encourage all of you tonight who love the justice system every bit as much as I do, and who understand its value... not just its cost, to speak out. Not in January when the budget hearings start, but between now and January when the budget begins.

There is not a more important mission for judges and lawyers in New Hampshire in the first half of the 21st century -- to make sure that the chief justice standing here, or somewhere else, 100 years from now, will say those New Hampshire lawyers mattered, they spoke up, they spoke out. If you won't, no one will. I encourage you to speak up.