

Bridge Dedicated in Honor of Justice Frye



On January 23, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NC DOT) honored retired Justice Henry E. Frye by naming a bridge after him in his hometown of Ellerbe; this is the highest honor that can be bestowed upon an individual by the NC DOT. The bridge, located on Green Lake Road just over Interstate 73/74, overlooks the land where Frye grew

up. Several state and local officials attended the bridge dedication ceremony, including North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper, who served as the event's keynote speaker.

During the ceremony, Frye quoted American writer Anthony D'Angelo saying: "Wherever you go, no matter what the weather, always bring your own sunshine." He continued the message of positivity by encouraging event-goers to, "lift the conversation, be positive, be encouragers."

According to media coverage of the event, Cooper said that Frye is an example of a leader who can bring people together rather than divide them. He also credited the retired lawmaker and judge with showing him that a state government ought to "look like the people it serves."

"When you drive across that bridge, you can remember not only the support of (Frye's) family, but also what he represents: that diversity is our strength," Cooper is quoted as saying by *The Wilson Times*

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Frye, who retired from Brooks Pierce in 2016, left his distinguished mark on the North Carolina legal system. In 1963, he was appointed Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of North Carolina, one of the first African-Americans to be appointed

Assistant U.S. Attorney in the South. In 1968, Frye became the first African-American to be elected to the North Carolina House of Representatives in the 20th century; he served for 12 years before being elected to a two-year term in the North Carolina Senate. In 1983, Frye became the first African-American appointed to the Supreme Court of North Carolina, and in 1999 he was appointed Chief Justice, another first. When he left the bench in 2001, Frye returned to private practice, joining Brooks Pierce, where he focused on appellate advocacy, mediation and commercial arbitration.

Coverage of the dedication ceremony in *The Wilson Times* can be viewed [here](#). Photos from the dedication ceremony can be viewed [here](#).

**Photos courtesy of the NC DOT.*