



## AS IT IS

# US Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg Dies at 87

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U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg died Friday night at her home in Washington, D.C. She was 87. Her death is likely to set up a political battle over when to nominate a **successor**.

Ginsburg died of problems connected to metastatic pancreatic cancer, the court said. Ginsburg announced in July that she was getting **chemotherapy** treatments for masses on her liver, the latest of her several battles with cancer.

Ginsburg was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1933. Her dream, she had said, was to be an opera singer. She finished at the top of her Columbia University law school class in 1959 but no law firm would hire her. She had, in her words from 2007, “three strikes against her” — for being Jewish, female and a mother.

She went to work with the American Civil Liberties Union in the 1970s. Ginsburg won several cases against gender discrimination. In 1980, she was appointed to serve on a U.S. Court of Appeals. She joined the Supreme Court in 1993, under President Bill Clinton.

Ginsburg spent her final years on the court as the unquestioned leader of its liberal wing. She became hugely popular for her defense of the rights of women and minorities. Many young people were among her fans, appointing her with the hip-hop style name “Notorious RBG.”

She was also widely respected for the strength she showed in the face of many health issues. Those issues included five cancer crises, beginning in 1999. She had a bad fall that resulted in broken bones, a heart operation and other hospitalizations all later in life.

"Our Nation has lost a jurist of historic stature," said Chief Justice John Roberts in a statement. "We at the Supreme Court have lost a **cherished** colleague. Today we mourn, but with **confidence** that future generations will remember Ruth Bader Ginsburg as we knew her -- a tireless and resolute champion of justice."

## Political debate over replacement

Her death came just six weeks before election day, November 3. The news immediately opened debate over whether President Donald Trump should nominate a replacement and the Republican-led Senate should hold confirmation hearings. Trump's main opponent in the race is Democratic Party candidate, Joe Biden.

Just hours after her death, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said in a statement, "President Trump's nominee will receive a vote on the floor of the United States Senate."

Democratic Senate leader Chuck Schumer replied on Twitter, "The American people should have a voice in the selection of their next Supreme Court Justice. Therefore, this vacancy should not be filled until we have a new president."

In 2016, McConnell refused to hold a hearing for a Supreme Court candidate nominated by President Barack Obama, a Democrat. McConnell said at the time, "The next president may also nominate someone very different. Either way, our view is this: Give the people a voice."

National Public Radio reported that Ginsburg told her granddaughter Clara Spera just before she died: "My most fervent wish is that I will not be replaced until a new president is installed."

I'm Caty Weaver.

*Caty Weaver wrote this report based on reports from The Associated Press and Reuters news agencies. Hai Do was the editor.*

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## Words in This Story

**successor** - n. someone who has a job, position after another person

**chemotherapy** - n. the use of chemical to treat or control cancer

**cherished** - adj. feeling great love

**confidence** - n. a feeling that you can do something well

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