

JOHN GILPIN HEYBURN II

John Heyburn grew up in Louisville, Kentucky. In 1970 he received his A.B. degree from Harvard University where he majored in history and received seven varsity letters in cross country and track, and completed three Boston Marathons. Judge Heyburn received his J.D. degree from the University of Kentucky in 1976.

From 1976 until his appointment to the bench, Judge Heyburn was associated with the law firm of Brown, Todd & Heyburn, where he was a partner at the firm from 1982 through 1992. His legal practice focused on civil litigation, with an emphasis on problems within the construction industry. Judge Heyburn also served as special counsel to then Jefferson County Judge Executive Mitch McConnell. Judge Heyburn was active in civic and political affairs in Kentucky. He was a delegate to the 1984 and 1988 Republican National Convention.

On March 20, 1992, President Bush nominated Judge Heyburn to the United States District Court for the Western District of Kentucky. He was confirmed by the United States Senate in August, 1992. From December, 2001, to December, 2008, Judge Heyburn served as Chief Judge of the Western District of Kentucky.

In 1994, Chief Justice Rehnquist appointed Judge Heyburn to serve on the Budget Committee of the Judicial Conference of the United States, which develops the appropriations request for the entire federal judiciary. In January, 1997, the Chief Justice appointed Judge Heyburn as Chair of the Budget Committee. He served as Chair until December, 2004. Judge Heyburn testified to the House and Senate each year to explain the judiciary policies and its budgetary needs. He has spoken throughout the country about the budget process and the requirements of an independent judiciary.

In June, 2007, Chief Justice Roberts appointed Judge Heyburn as Chair of the Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation. The Panel decides whether cases in districts around the country, including many nationwide class actions, should be consolidated and the appropriate site for consolidation. Judge Heyburn has spoken on the subject of class action litigation and the role of the Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation.

Judge Heyburn is married to the former Martha Blackledge Keeney who has retired from her ophthalmology practice. They have two sons.