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Colorado Judicial Department  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Aug. 19, 2020

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## **Chief Justice Nathan B. Coats announces retirement, Justice Brian D. Boatright to serve as next Chief Justice as Colorado Supreme Court moves to rotational terms for Chief**

DENVER – The Colorado Supreme Court announced today that Chief Justice Nathan B. Coats will retire in January 2021, when he reaches the Colorado Constitution’s mandatory retirement age of 72. The Court will issue a formal vacancy announcement with a request for applications later this year.

Chief Justice Coats has a distinguished career in public service. He served as an appellate attorney in the Colorado Attorney General’s Office for eight years and as Chief Appellate Deputy District Attorney for the Second Judicial District for 14 years. Governor Bill Owens appointed Chief Justice Coats to the Colorado Supreme Court in 2000. He was selected by the Court to be the Chief Justice in 2018.

The Justices of the Supreme Court have unanimously voted to move to shorter rotational terms for the office of Chief Justice, selecting Justice Brian D. Boatright to serve as Chief Justice upon Chief Justice Coats’s retirement, and selecting Justice Monica M. Márquez to serve as the next Chief Justice following Justice Boatright’s term of office. The Court believes that announcing both selections now provides for continuity of leadership for the Judicial Branch.

Justice Boatright brings extensive experience as a trial court judge and with probation programs and policies. The Supreme Court believes that Justice Boatright is well equipped to handle the current challenges facing Colorado trial courts due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related budget shortfalls. “I am humbled to lead the Judicial Branch in these extraordinary times,” Justice Boatright said. “As Chief Justice, I plan to focus my energy on supporting our trial courts and probation departments as they continue to adapt to the impacts of the COVID-19

pandemic and safely conduct the important work of the Branch.” Justice Márquez added, “The Judicial Branch will be in good hands these next few years with Justice Boatright. I bring my support and extensive state government experience, and I’ll be running at full speed when Justice Boatright passes the baton.”

Justice Boatright was born and raised in Colorado. He graduated from Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri and received his Juris Doctorate from the University of Denver. Justice Boatright served as a Deputy District Attorney for more than nine years. In 1999, Governor Bill Owens appointed Justice Boatright as a District Court Judge in the First Judicial District. Governor John Hickenlooper appointed Justice Boatright to the Colorado Supreme Court in 2011. Justice Boatright is the 47<sup>th</sup> member of the Court to serve as Chief Justice since Colorado’s statehood in 1876.

The Colorado Supreme Court is the state’s court of last resort. Its decisions are binding on all other Colorado state courts. Under the Colorado Constitution, the Chief Justice serves as the executive head of the Colorado Judicial Branch, comprising the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals, as well as the state’s district and county courts. The Judicial Branch employs approximately 3,900 court and probation employees, including 410 justices, judges and magistrates. Last fiscal year, the state court system heard 641,000 cases of all types, and the probation system supervised more than 80,000 adult and juvenile offenders.