

Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg Dies at 87

Editor's Note: This story has been updated since its original posting as news continues to break.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the first Jewish woman selected to serve on the United States Supreme Court, died Friday of metastatic pancreatic cancer at age 87, the Supreme Court announced and many media outlets reported.

Ginsburg, who served 27 years on the nation's highest court, died at her home in Washington, D.C., surrounded by her family, reported. She passed away on Rosh Hashanah, the first of the Jewish High Holy Days and beginning of the Fall Feasts.

Ginsburg's death will most certainly spark a tumultuous political battle over who will replace her, judging by the events and controversy that surrounded President Donald Trump's previous selection of Brett Kavanaugh. The nomination of a new Supreme Court justice is sure to be thrust into the spotlight of an already heated presidential contest between President Trump and Democratic nominee Joe Biden.

The political implications appear to be immediate. *The New York Times* has reported that "Democratic donors gave more money online in the 9 p.m. hour Friday after Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's death was announced—\$6.2 million—than in any other single hour since ActBlue, the donation-processing site, was started 16 years ago. Then donors broke the site's record again in the 10 p.m. hour when donors gave another \$6.3 million—more than \$100,000 per minute. The unprecedented outpouring shows the power of a looming Supreme Court confirmation fight to motivate Democratic donors. The previous biggest hour, on Aug. 20, when Joseph R. Biden Jr. spoke on the final night of the Democratic convention, saw \$4.3 million

in donations processed, according to an ActBlue spokesperson. Before noon on Saturday, donations to Democratic causes and campaigns on ActBlue since Justice Ginsburg's passing had topped \$45 million."

The spiritual implications of Ginsburg's passing will also be huge.

Ginsburg's death could give President Trump the opportunity to name her replacement. *The New York Times* reported that "Senate Republicans have promised to try to fill the vacancy even in the waning days of his first term, which ends in January."

President Trump is expected to put forth a nominee to fill Ginsburg's seat in the coming days, multiple sources close to the president and with direct knowledge of the situation said, ABC News reported Friday evening.

The president released a list of 20 potential nominees for the vacant court position, including Senators Ted Cruz, R-Texas; Tom Cotton, R-Ark.; and Josh Hawley, R-Mo., Fox News reported Friday. The president said the 20 new names are being added to his previous list of 25 judges.

In a statement released to Fox, Cotton said: "The Supreme Court could use some more justices who understand the difference between applying the law and making the law, which the Court does when it invents a right to an abortion, infringes on religious freedom, and erodes the Second Amendment."

Cotton also tweeted moments before Trump announced his list:

It's time for Roe v. Wade to go.

– Tom Cotton (@TomCottonAR) September 9, 2020

Cruz also commented on Twitter about the significance for the nation of Ginsburg's passing:

We cannot have Election Day come and go with a 4-4 Court. We risk a constitutional crisis if we do not have a 9-Justice Supreme Court, particularly when there is such a risk of a contested election.

– Senator Ted Cruz (@SenTedCruz) September 19, 2020

During his nearly four years in office, Trump has appointed two members of the Supreme Court, Kavanaugh and Justice Neil M. Gorsuch, which has shifted the court slightly to the right. Ginsburg was the leader of the court's four-member liberal wing, and another Trump appointee could transform the high court into a decidedly conservative one.

In November, a week after the presidential election, Republicans, for the third time, will challenge the Affordable Care Act instituted by former President Barack Obama during his administration. Chief Justice John Roberts cast the deciding vote in 2012 in a 5-4 decision and wrote the opinion for the majority.

Ginsburg had an adversarial relationship with Trump. NPR also reported that, "just days before her death, as her strength waned, Ginsburg dictated this statement to her granddaughter Clara Spera: 'My most fervent wish is that I will not be replaced until a new president is installed.'

In a statement, Roberts said, "Our nation has lost a justice of historic stature. 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 tired and resolute champion of justice."

Leaders were quick to respond on social media to the news of Ginsburg's death. Senator Rand Paul, R-Pa., tweeted, "My thoughts and prayers are with the family of Ruth Bader Ginsburg tonight. She leaves a legacy of thoughtful public service, a dedication to the law, and a life of great

accomplishment. May she Rest In Peace.”

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– Senator Rand Paul (@RandPaul) September 19, 2020

“Even those who disagreed with many of her decisions recognize Justice Ginsburg was a woman of extraordinary intellect & an American who had a historic impact on the court & the nation. May she Rest in Peace,” Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., tweeted.

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– Marco Rubio (@marcorubio) September 19, 2020

And Franklin Graham, president of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and Samaritan’s Purse, added his own thoughts on Twitter.

Pray for the family of SCOTUS Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg who passed away today. May God comfort her loved ones.

– Franklin Graham (@Franklin_Graham) September 18, 2020

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., released a statement about Ginsburg’s death that began, “The Senate and the nation mourn the sudden passing of Ruth Bader Ginsburg and the conclusion of her extraordinary life.” The statement ended with a key comment: “President Trump’s nominee will receive a vote on the floor of the United States Senate.”

The Senate and the nation mourn the passing of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and the conclusion of her extraordinary American life.

My full statement:

– Leader McConnell (@senatemajldr) September 19, 2020

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo tweeted:

Saddened at the passing of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. She was a true pioneer who worked tirelessly as a champion of the law, and will be remembered by generations to come. We are grateful for her service. My deepest condolences to her family and loved ones.

– Secretary Pompeo (@SecPompeo) September 19, 2020

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