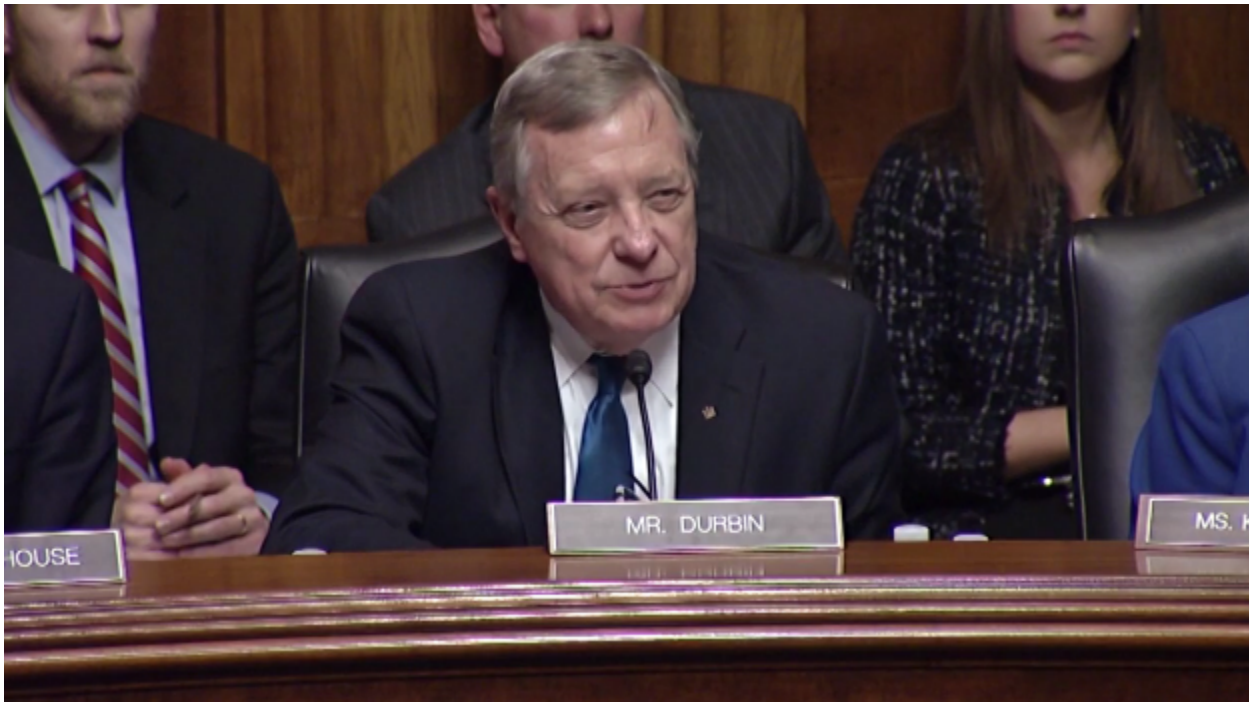


Durbin statement on Seventh Circuit Judge Ann Claire Williams assuming senior status

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) today released the following statement upon the announcement that Seventh Circuit Judge Ann Claire Williams, the first African-American judge to serve on the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals, has assumed senior status. Senior status allows veteran federal judges to retire but continue working with a reduced caseload.

“Judge Ann Claire Williams has been an inspirational leader on the bench. She has served the people of Illinois and the 7th Circuit with integrity, fairness, and unmatched legal acumen. Her trailblazing judicial career has inspired a generation of attorneys in

Illinois and across the nation. Now that she has assumed senior status, Senator Duckworth and I will work to ensure that her vacant seat is filled by a well-qualified, mainstream nominee who lives up to the high standards that Judge Williams has set.”

In 1999, Ann Claire Williams was appointed to the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit by President Bill Clinton. Judge Williams became the first African-American ever to serve on the Seventh Circuit and the third African-American woman to serve on any United States Court of Appeals. Judge Williams had previously been appointed in 1985 by President Ronald Reagan to the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. She was the first African-American woman appointed to a district court in the Seventh Circuit, which includes Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin. Williams assumed senior status on June 5, 2017.