

Utah politicians honor the memory of 'hero' Supreme Court Justice Ginsburg

'Justice Ginsburg's record of distinguished service leaves an indelible mark on our country that will endure for generations to come,' said Utah Sen. Mitt Romney

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Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg speaks at the Filmmaker Lodge in Park City on Sunday, Jan. 21, 2018, at the Sundance Film Festival. Ginsburg talked about her career, issues facing women and movies she has enjoyed, such as "Gone With the Wind."

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SALT LAKE CITY — Utah's political leaders reacted to the death of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg by honoring her lifelong pursuit of justice and service to the nation, with many offering their prayers in memory.

"Justice Ginsburg served our nation with a deep reverence for the law and our Constitution. Her fight for women's equality inspired all women to pursue their dreams without limits, and her grit, character and sharp wit made her an iconic and inspirational jurist beloved by people young and old," said Utah Sen. Mitt Romney in a statement Friday night.

The Republican senator continued, "the beautiful friendship she shared with the late Justice Scalia serves as a reminder to all Americans to treat each other with kindness and respect, despite our differences. Justice Ginsburg's record of distinguished service leaves an indelible mark on our country that will endure for generations to come."

In a tribute on social media, Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah also wrote of Ginsburg's "profound influence."

"Justice Ginsburg devoted her entire life to reading, interpreting, and understanding the law. To describe her as a gifted lawyer and jurist who had a profound influence on our country is an understatement," the senator said on Twitter. "My thoughts and prayers are with her and her family."

Lee and his brother, Utah Supreme Court Associate Chief Justice Thomas Lee, remain on President Donald Trump's list of potential U.S. Supreme Court Justice nominees, the White House confirmed earlier this month as it announced 20 candidates had been added.

Sen. Mike Lee, brother Thomas Lee still on Trump's potential Supreme Court nominee list
Rep. Chris Stewart, R-Utah, also said his prayers were "with her family and loved ones."

Many of the tributes to Ginsburg Friday appeared on Twitter and Facebook. Utah's lone Democrat in Congress, Rep. Ben McAdams, posted that "Ruth Bader Ginsberg lived her life with dedication and commitment. She made a lasting mark on the bench and our entire nation. I am grateful for the service she gave to our country and send my deep condolences to her family and loved ones."

"I'm saddened to hear about the loss of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Her decades of service to our Nation & her legacy will be celebrated well into the future," wrote Utah Rep. John Curtis on Twitter.

Curtis said that "RBG helped shape our nation into what it is today & I express my deepest condolences to her family."

Former longtime Utah Senator Orrin Hatch described Ginsburg as "a dear friend whose impact extended well beyond the Supreme Court."

Hatch's statement was shared Friday on the Orrin G. Hatch Foundation's Twitter account.

"Of course, it's no secret that Justice Ginsburg and I were on opposite sides on most issues. But we both loved this country greatly, and that was the kindling of a decades-long friendship," wrote the former Republican senator. "I hope that as an American family, we can one day look beyond politics to see what's best in each other as Ruth and I did.

"May God bless the Ginsburg family, and may He bless our country in the months ahead."

Utah Republican Gov. Gary Herbert said Ginsburg was a "force of nature" with a "keen intellect and tremendous work ethic."

"She broke through countless barriers, shattering ceilings and leading the way for women to have more involvement in government. She was a true pioneer in every sense," Herbert wrote on Twitter, as he and First Lady Jeanette Herbert offered their condolences.

"Two years ago I had the honor of meeting Justice Ginsburg. She had a brilliant legal mind and was every bit as funny and engaging as advertised. We obviously disagreed on many legal opinions, but honor her legacy as a trailblazer and dedicated public servant," Utah Lt. Gov. Spencer Cox reminisced on Twitter.

Salt Lake County Mayor Jenny Wilson said in a statement that "Justice Ginsburg broke ground and glass ceilings at the same time. She fought for equality and justice and never backed down in the face of opposition. She is a hero to me and millions of other women who looked to her as a North Star for her principled leadership. We will miss her more than we realize today, and we should all mourn together for the loss of a great American treasure."

"I'm speechless at the loss of Ruth Bader Ginsburg," said Salt Lake City Mayor Erin Mendenhall on Twitter. "She was an iconic, trailblazing, intellectual woman. My thoughts are with her family and our nation."

Ginsburg participated the 2018 Sundance Film Festival — "RGB," a documentary about her life, premiered at the festival in Park City that year — and discussed her career and her own experience with sexual harassment and the #metoo movement. The late justice spent her career championing women's rights.

Ginsburg and her storied career were also remembered Friday among Utah's legal community.

“Today, America lost a legal giant and proud champion of women’s rights,” Utah Attorney General Sean Reyes said in a statement. “Regardless of party or politics, no one can deny her historic impact on the High Court. We pray her lifelong example of service may unite us as a nation in mourning her passing.”

For Ruth Bader Ginsburg, oneness never was meant to be sameness

The American Civil Liberties Union of Utah wrote in a statement Friday night that “we mourn the death of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who not only honorably served our nation on the U.S. Supreme Court, but who also created a new framework for equality as the co-founder of the ACLU’s Women’s Rights Project.

“Let us take this time to reflect and learn about the remarkable life and accomplishments of this fearless advocate for justice,” they added.

Utah Democratic Party Chairman Jeff Merchant said in a statement that he would “forever be grateful for Justice Ginsburg’s impact.”

“I look at my three daughters and know that we must continue the legacy that she leaves. Her voice has been silenced, but the fight continues. We cannot and must not let her fire go out. Thank you and Bless you,” the party chairman said.

University of Utah law professor and Democratic gubernatorial candidate Chris Peterson also expressed his condolences on social media.

“I am deeply saddened by the loss of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. She was a pioneer in the fight against gender discrimination and extraordinary jurist,” Peterson wrote. “The loss of this American hero is profound, but her legacy of shaping the history of this country remains.”