



From NFDW President Cindy Jenks

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Stunned, and extremely saddened, we have learned of the passing of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. She has been fighting for all of us for so long that a world without her just doesn't seem possible.

Ginsburg began her professional career as an attorney at the American Civil Liberties Union and she successfully argued several cases before the Supreme Court. During this time, she made gender equality her priority. One of her first cases was representing a man who was being discriminated against because of his gender.

Justice Ginsburg is without a doubt one of the most important justices to ever serve on the Supreme Court. She was first appointed to the Court of Appeals for the D.C. District by President Jimmy Carter. President Bill Clinton appointed her to the Supreme Court in 1993, and she faced a daunting interview by three conservative senators, who then voted against her. When one asked her about *Roe v Wade*, Ginsburg said, "This is something central to a woman's life, to her dignity. It's a decision that she must make for herself. And when government controls that decision for her, she's being treated as less than a fully adult human responsible for her own choices."

Interestingly, Ginsburg found her voice when writing her dissenting opinions. When the Supreme Court ruled against Lilly Ledbetter, Ginsburg wrote the dissent. When President Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter, Fair Pay Act into law, he autographed a copy of the bill and presented it to Justice Ginsburg. She framed the bill and kept it in her office.

One of Justice Ginsburg's most famous opinions was written in 1996 when she wrote for the majority in *U.S. v Virginia*. The Virginia Military Institute's 157-year tradition of admitting only males to the institution came to an end when Ginsburg wrote that the practice was unconstitutional. She is also quoted as saying that if she could add anything to the U.S. Constitution it would be the Equal Rights Amendment.

Justice Ginsburg was a trailblazer and a monumental jurist that will likely never be matched in comparison to her work ethic, her wit and her dedication to fairness and justice for all persons. She will be missed.