



HON. ROBERT O’CONNOR, JR. (Ret.)

United States District Judge, Southern District of Texas

After an illustrious legal career in public service as United States District Judge for the Southern District of Texas District in the Laredo, Brownsville, Corpus Christi, and Houston Divisions, Judge Robert O’Connor, Jr. is applying his vast experience and knowledge to alternative dispute resolution by handling mediations and arbitrations for NAM (National Arbitration and Mediation).

During his decade long tenure as District Judge, he presided over all federal civil and criminal dockets of the district and handled matters that included Title VII, the Federal Employers Liability Act (FELA), admiralty, governmental entities, constitution, patent, maritime, federal claims and civil rights matters (including the Houston Independent School District desegregation case). He was appointed District Judge by President Gerald Ford in 1975.

Judge O’Connor resigned from the bench in 1984 and has resumed the practice of law in Houston where he specializes in personal injury, federal and state litigation of medical negligence, premises and product liability, Jones Act, vehicular accidents, toxic torts, wrongful death and complex commercial contracts. He is board certified in Personal Injury Trial Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization.

Prior to his tenure on the bench, Judge O’Connor practiced general law that involved state and federal civil and criminal litigation, both plaintiff and defendant, personal injury litigation, probate, family law, election law, real property transactions, international trade and customs law, civil criminal appeals in state and federal courts.

With decades of trial experience – including years of courtroom hours as a federal district judge in a broad spectrum of cases – Judge O’Connor has garnered a reputation of being a hard-working and detail oriented jurist. With his even-handed disposition, he brings to the ADR arena strong negotiation and settlement skills that he honed as lawyer and trial judge. He is well-versed in the law and is dedicated to the efficient and effective resolution of every case he handles. Judge O’Connor has received the highest rating (“AV”) from Martindale-Hubbell, – a distinction given only to those who possess the highest ethical standards and professional ability.

The Honorable Robert O’Connor, Jr. is available to arbitrate and mediate cases throughout the United States.

AREAS of EXPERIENCE

- Admiralty
- Commercial Litigation
- Employment / Labor
- Environmental / CERCLA
- Federal Statutory Claims
- Insurance / Reinsurance
- Intellectual Property (Trademark & Copyright)
- Railroad and Maritime
- Negligence
- Patent
- Personal Injury
- Product Liability
- Social Security
- Title VII, FELA
- Appeals in State and Federal Court

SELECTED REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- *Ross v. Houston Independent School District* (Desegregation of H. I.S.D.)
- *Pemex v. Sedco* (Pemex-Ixtoc I Oil Spill)
- *Schlumberger v. I.R.S.*
- *W.J. Estelle Unit, Texas Department of Criminal Justice* (Prison Desegregation)
- *Nissho-Iwai Co. Ltd. v. Occidental Crude*
- *U.S. v. Billy Clayton et al.* (Speaker of Texas House)

SELECTED DISTRICT COURT OPINIONS

- *Complaint of Sedco, Inc.*, 610 F. Supp. 306 (S.D. Tex. 1984), remand for arbitration 767 F. 2d 1140 (5th Cir. 1985)
- *Matter of Sedco, Inc.*, 543 F. Supp. 561 (S.D. Tex. 1982)
- *Trigg v. Texaco, Inc.*, 511 F. Supp. 447 (S.D. Tex. 1981)
- *Coalition to Preserve Houston and the Houston Independent School District v. Westheimer Independent School District*, 494 F. Supp. 738 (S.D. Tex. 1980), affirmed on appeal, 450 U.S. 901, 101 S. Ct. 1335, (1981)
- *Rountree v. Varco International, Inc.*, 487 F. Supp 3 (S.D. Tex. 1978), affirmed, 618 F. 2d 1183 (5th Cir. 1980)

OPINIONS on APPEAL

- *U.S. v. Cook*, 553 F.2d 900 (5th Cir. 1977) (District Court affirmed)
- *U.S. v. Cruz*, 559 F.2d 300 (5th Cir. 1977) (District Court affirmed); 570 F.2d 95 (5th Cir. 1978) (rehearing en banc granted; 681 F.2d 535 (5th Cir. 1978) (en banc reversed conviction); 587 F.2d 277 ((5th Cir. 1978) (rehearing denied)
- *Goss v. San Jacinto Junior College*, 588 F.2d 96 (5th Cir. 1979) (District Court affirmed); 593 F.2d 23 (5th Cir. 1979) (rehearing and remand on attorney's fees); 595 F.2d 1119 (5th Cir. 1979)
- *Ross v. Houston Independent School District*, 669 F.2d 218 (5th Cir., 1983) (District Court affirmed)
- *Nissho-Iwai Co, Ltd. V. Occidental Crude Sales*, 729 F.2d 1530 (5th Cir. 1984) (District Court affirmed in part, reversed fraud claim, and remand for retrial on damages)

NOTABLE CASES on APPEAL

- *Dodsworth v. Celebrezze*, 349 F.2d 315 (5th Cir. 1965) (reversing district court finding against viability of disability for paranoid schizophrenia)
- *Dispensa v. Lynaugh*, 847 F.2d 211 (5th Cir. 1988) (on rehearing: affirmed habeas corpus writ granted by district court)
(60 federal case citations to 2018)

HONORS and AWARDS

- AV Rating, Martindale – Hubbell Peer Review Ratings System

JUDICIAL EXPERIENCE

- United States District Court Judge, Southern District of Texas, 1975 - 1984

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

- Founder, Robert O'Connor, Jr. - LAWYER, 1989 – Present
- Partner, Adler & O'Connor, 1984 -1989
- Attorney, Robert O'Connor, Jr. – Law Office, 1958 - 1975

PROFESSIONAL LICENSES and ADMISSIONS

- State Bar of Texas, 1958
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas, 1987
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas, 1986
- U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas, 1968
- U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas, 1958
- U.S. Court of International Trade, 1986
- U.S. Supreme Court, 1970
- U.S. Court of Claims, 1968
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit, 1964
- Personal Injury Trial Law, Texas Board of Legal Specialization
- A.A. White Dispute Resolution Center - Mediation

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS and ASSOCIATIONS

- Member, State Bar of Texas, Litigation Sections
- Judicial Liaison Committee, 1984 – 1985
- Secretary-Treasurer, Family Law Council, 1973 - 1974
- Secretary- Treasurer, Council of Local Bar Presidents, 1972 – 1973
- Member, Houston Bar Association
- Member, Bar Association of the Fifth Federal Circuit
- Honorary Member, Federal Bar Association
- Personal Injury Trial Law, Texas Board of Legal Specialization

EDUCATION

- University of Texas, LL.B., 1957
- University of Texas, B.A., 1956
- University of Houston, Mediation / Arbitration Course, 2005