

1-2000

The Honorable Charles E. Wiggins

UC Hastings College of the Law

Follow this and additional works at: https://repository.uchastings.edu/hastings_law_journal



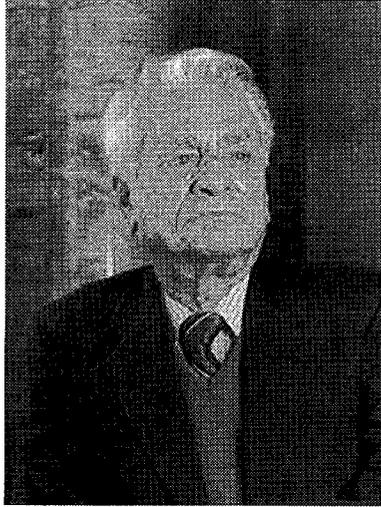
Part of the [Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

UC Hastings College of the Law, *The Honorable Charles E. Wiggins*, 51 HASTINGS L.J. 771 (2000).

Available at: https://repository.uchastings.edu/hastings_law_journal/vol51/iss4/15

This Comment is brought to you for free and open access by the Law Journals at UC Hastings Scholarship Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Hastings Law Journal by an authorized editor of UC Hastings Scholarship Repository.



Stephanie Turner

Courtesy of *The Recorder*

The Honorable Charles E. Wiggins

Judge Charles E. Wiggins, a senior judge on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, passed away on March 2, 2000.

Born in the southern California city of El Monte in 1927, Judge Wiggins received his B.S. and LL.B. from the University of Southern California. He served the City of El Monte as Planning Commissioner and Mayor before being elected to the House of Representatives in 1967, where he represented eastern Los Angeles and northern Orange counties for six terms.

As a Republican member of the House Judiciary Committee during its hearings on the impeachment of President Nixon, Judge Wiggins was one of the President's strongest defenders. During weeks of closed hearings and six days of televised debate, he argued that no evidence directly linked the President to any crime. With the release of the "smoking gun" tape, which revealed that President Nixon had helped to conceal the Watergate break-in, Wiggins' view changed. "These facts alone," Wiggins said, "are legally sufficient in my opinion to sustain at least one count against the president of conspiracy to obstruct justice." Accordingly, Wiggins stated that he had reached the "painful conclusion" that it was in the nation's interest for President Nixon to resign. President Nixon did so on August 9, 1974.

In 1998, Judge Wiggins again found himself arguing against the impeachment of a President. He testified before the House Judiciary Committee, counseling against voting to impeach President Clinton. Again, he advocated the need for stronger evidence to support an impeachment.

Hastings Law Journal is grateful for the contribution that Judge Wiggins made to the Watergate symposium. His presence added depth to this scholarly examination of the lasting impact of Watergate on the American political and legal landscape.