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**Honorable Ralph D. Gants of the Supreme Judicial Court
Administered Oath of Office**

BOSTON, MA -- Governor Deval Patrick today administered the Oath of Office to the Honorable Ralph D. Gants, who was sworn in as the thirty-seventh Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court before an assembly of several hundred people in the Great Hall of the John Adams Courthouse.

"I am extremely honored and proud to administer the oath of office to Ralph Gants as Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court," said Governor Patrick. "Throughout his career, Justice Gants has demonstrated an abiding fidelity to the rule of law and the constitutional balance of civil rights and civil responsibilities. He has earned the high respect and deep admiration of all for his intellectual rigor, pragmatism, fair-mindedness, compassion and work ethic. He is known as gracious, humble and quick-witted. And he understands that the law needs to be just and make sense in the lives of real people."

The ceremony began with a processional led by the Massachusetts Trial Court Honor Guard. Supreme Judicial Court Justice Margot Botsford served as Mistress of Ceremonies. Rabbi Carolyn Bricklin-Small of Temple Shir Tikvah in Winchester delivered an invocation, and renowned musicians Athene Wilson & Rollins Ross gave a special musical performance. The national anthem was performed by two high school students from the Boston Arts Academy. The Rev. Joy K. Fallon, Senior Minister of King's Chapel in Boston delivered a benediction at the end of the ceremony.

"I am blessed to be the Chief Justice of a Supreme Judicial Court that is unmatched in its open-mindedness, its commitment to do justice with mercy, and its diversity," Chief Justice Gants said following his official swearing in. "I firmly believe that our judicial system will be in a better place in the next three, five, ten years. My confidence does not rest in my belief in me, because I know that I can accomplish none of this alone. My confidence rests in my belief in we, in what I call our justice team."

Honorable Dina E. Fein, First Justice of the Housing Court, Western Division, and a special advisor for Access to Justice initiatives, was a guest speaker. "Chief Justice Gants believes that ensuring meaningful access to the court system for every member of the public is fundamental to

our existence as a constitutional democracy. He knows that ultimately justice doesn't exist for any of us if it doesn't exist equally for all of us," Judge Fein said.

Chief Justice Gants was appointed as an Associate Justice of the Superior Court in 1997 by Governor William Weld. In 2008, he served as Administrative Justice of the Superior Court's Business Litigation Session. He chaired the Superior Court Rules Committee, and was a member of the Supreme Judicial Court's Standing Advisory Committee on the Rules of Civil Procedure and its Ad Hoc Advisory Committee to Study Canon 3B(9) of the Code of Judicial Conduct.

Governor Patrick appointed him to the Supreme Judicial Court in January 2009 as an Associate Justice. Chief Justice Gants has served as co-chair of the Massachusetts Access to Justice Commission since 2010, and has served as the Justice member of the Supreme Judicial Court's Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Services since 2011. He chaired the Standing Committee that revised the Model Jury Instructions on Homicide in 2013.

Born in New Rochelle, New York in 1954, Chief Justice Gants received his B.A. from Harvard College in 1976, graduating summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa. The following year he completed a Diploma in Criminology at Cambridge University in England. In 1980, he earned a J.D. degree, magna cum laude, from Harvard Law School where he was note editor of the Harvard Law Review. After graduating from law school, Chief Justice Gants served as Law Clerk to United States District Court Judge Eugene H. Nickerson. From 1981 to 1983, he was Special Assistant to Judge William H. Webster, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. In 1983, he was appointed Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Massachusetts, serving as Chief of the Public Corruption Division from 1988 to 1991. In 1991, he joined the Boston law firm formerly known as Palmer & Dodge LLP, becoming a partner in 1994.

Chief Justice Gants has taught courses in Advanced Criminal Procedure, Balancing Liberty and Security, White Collar Prosecution and Defense, Civil Trial Practice, and Civil Motions Practice at Harvard Law School, New England School of Law, and Northeastern University School of Law. In 2012, he was awarded the Boston Bar Association Citation of Judicial Excellence and the Suffolk Law School Public Service Award. He is married with two children.

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