

Supreme Court of the United States  
Washington, D. C. 20543

CHAMBERS OF  
JUSTICE DAVID H. SOUTER

June 29, 2009

Dear Colleagues,

Your generous letter has touched me more than I can say, and I will only try to leave you with some sense of what our common service has meant to me. You quoted the Poet, and I will, too, in words that set out the ideal of the life engaged, "... where love and need are one. . . ."

That phrase accounts for the finest moments of my life on this Court, as we have agreed or contended with each other over those things that matter to decent people in a civil society. For nineteen Terms, I have lived that life with you, all of us sharing our own best years with one another, working side by side as fellow servants and as friends.

I will not sit with you at our bench again after the Court rises for the Summer this time, but neither will I retire from our friendship, which has held us together despite the pull of the most passionate dissent. It has made the work lighter through all my tenure here, and for as long as I live, I will be thankful for it, and be under a very grateful obligation to each one of you.

Yours affectionately,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Souter", with a horizontal line underneath.