

**Remarks of Judge Edward Emmett O'Farrell
on the occasion of the presentation to
Edward Icove of Ohio Citizens Action
"Constitutional Guardian" Award
on 10/23/2010, Cleveland, Ohio**

Ladies and Gentlemen:

My name is Edward O'Farrell. I am a General Division Common Pleas Court Judge in New Philadelphia. I am completing my twenty-ninth (29th) year of judicial service in Tuscarawas County. I am greatly honored to present Ohio Citizens Action's highest award, the Constitutional Guardian Award, to Ed Icove.

As we progress through our lives, catalog myriad experiences, good and bad, significant as well as less momentous, and, hopefully become wiser, more compassionate, and certainly humbler as a result of coming face to face with the reality that we just might not achieve every one of those goals set in the idealistic fervor of our

youth, there are moments such as this when we come as close as possible to fully understanding and appreciating the singular importance of our commitment, held in common with all peace and justice-seeking men and women, to a fair and just and tolerant society for all. Those men and women honored here tonight represent the heart and soul, the very essence of the “justice-seeking” community of Northeast Ohio. I am truly humbled to be in your presence.

My professional and personal relationships with Ed Icové date back to 1977. I was the neophyte Managing Attorney of a Legal Aid Office in New Philadelphia serving the rural and semi-rural poverty populations of a five (5) county area in Northeastern Appalachia, and believed

deeply in the cause-accessing the civil justice system and delivering quality legal representation to our clients. I readily- and proudly- confessed to a classically liberal philosophy and sought to surround myself with “like-minded” lawyers and support staff. I realized immediately when interviewing Ed for a Staff Attorney position that he was not only committed to our shared goals of equal access and justice for our clients but that he was uniquely gifted as an articulate consumer advocate (and I mean articulate as anyone would know who has ever attempted to actually conclude a conversation with Ed once he was started on an issue near and dear to his heart!) and that he would immeasurably enhance the quality of our Legal Services

Office and final product delivered to our client community.

Ladies and gentlemen, did I ever underestimate the impact

Ed would have on the collective consumer law intelligence

quotient of our Municipal and Common Pleas Court Judges

and the local bars of our service area.

Ed Icove singlehandedly transformed the practice of consumer law in Southeastern Ohio during his Legal Aid tenure. His brilliantly crafted oral and written legal apologia in support of novel and creative consumer law claims are legend. It was almost as if Ed conducted a non-stop tutorial on Ohio and Federal Consumer Law issues for the Judges and lawyers implicated by his indefatigable and relentless and unapologetic onslaught of the widespread

violations of his clients' legal rights. He literally struck fear into the hearts and minds of the local bar winning case after case for his clients- if not at the unenlightened Trial Court level, then certainly at the Court of Appeals level. He was indeed something very "special" then- and in the intervening years has accomplished all that we who were privileged to know and work with him in the early years always knew would be his destiny.

In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, there is no other lawyer I have encountered in my legal aid and judicial experiences who is more deserving of the revered accolade- Guardian of the Constitution- than is Ed Icove. Ohio Citizens Action has wisely and insightfully chosen Ed for

this highest of honors. Ed, our collective hope and expectation is that you will continue to grace the Courts of this state and nation with your legal skills and passion in behalf of the many men and women whose lives will be greatly and positively enhanced by your zealous and skillful advocacy for many years to come. Take with you tonight our deepest and most heartfelt gratitude and affection for all that you have so unselfishly done for so many. Yours, indeed, is a life well and productively lived. Be justifiably proud of all that you have accomplished. Your legacy is clearly and indisputably established. Congratulations.