



Mr. Jesse Crenshaw

September 23, 1946 - April 26, 2026

Jesse Crenshaw, 79, died April 26, 2026, following an illness. Born September 23, 1946, the oldest of four sons, to O.C. and Magdalene Brewer Crenshaw and raised from age eight by grandparents Jessie and Elva Crenshaw on their 168 acre farm in Knob Lick near the Metcalfe-Barren County line, Jesse began a life of hard work, determination, achievement, and excellence, and from a very young age, he knew his life's work would be as a lawyer.

Educated in segregated public schools and graduating as high school valedictorian, Jesse received his undergraduate degree from Kentucky State University and earned a law degree from the University of Kentucky School of Law, the completion of which was interrupted by service in the army during the Vietnam War.

He broke racial barriers as the first black assistant federal prosecutor in the U.S. Eastern District of Kentucky. As State Representative for the 77th House District, Jesse served Lexington's North and East sides from 1993 to 2014, the first black representative elected from Fayette County. In addition to advocating for civil rights and fairness under the law, Jesse's legislative work affected many major community investments, impacting civic development and many families' lives.

Jesse returned to Kentucky State as an educator of criminal justice for many years while also maintaining a law practice. Through his legislative work he helped establish and fund the Kentucky Legal Education Opportunity program for increasing the number of historically underrepresented students in

Kentucky's law schools.

Thoughtful and focused, steady and prepared, Jesse lived a life of service that commanded respect but never asked for recognition. He will be missed terribly by his family, friends, and neighbors of the Constitution neighborhood. Jesse is survived by his brother, Braxton Crenshaw (Beth), partner of four decades, Martha Moore, and special friend and helper of many years, Jerome Holland.

Cemetery Details

Lexington Cemetery

833 W. Main Street
Lexington, KY 40508

Previous Events

Funeral Service

MAY 4. 1:00 PM (ET)

Consolidated Baptist Church
1625 Russell Cave Road
Lexington, KY 40511

Visitation 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Tribute Wall

RP

“ *Jesse was one of the best. My deepest condolences to Braxton and the rest of the Crenshaw family.*

Ron Phillippi - May 06 at 03:22 PM

WT

“ *Braxton, I remember J.C. and me working with horses and mules on cousin Jesse's farm your grandfather. Hard work, but those days make me smile. Times gone by. May God bless you and the rest of the family. William Twyman*

William Twyman - May 04 at 04:32 PM

MB

“ *A long time friend.*
Mary Bradley

mary bradley - May 04 at 12:33 PM