William Doyle Ruckelshaus
Doctor of Laws

In the politically volatile and often partisan world of environmental policy, William Doyle Ruckelshaus epitomizes the ideals of statesmanship, personal integrity, and broad-based cooperation toward the attainment of common civic goals.

Mr. Ruckelshaus is a graduate of Princeton (cum laude, 1957) and the Harvard Law School (1960). He has twice headed the United States Environmental Protection Agency. In 1970 President Richard Nixon appointed Mr. Ruckelshaus as EPA’s first administrator. During that term he set the standard for the agency’s vigorous commitment to enforce environmental laws and established its reputation for integrity and independence from undue political influence. In 1983, after the EPA’s reputation had become tarnished, President Ronald Reagan called William Ruckelshaus back into public service. He restored public trust in the EPA and boosted its internal morale by returning to a policy of vigorous enforcement of the law and leading the agency in innovative directions such as risk-based decision-making, pollution prevention, and economic incentives to achieve the spirit rather than the letter of the law.

In private life, Mr. Ruckelshaus served for a decade as vice president of the Weyerhauser Company, and has been for the past several years chief executive officer of Browning-Ferris Industries, one of the world’s largest environmental waste management firms. He also heads the Enterprise for the Environment, a broadly-based nonpartisan initiative to make American environmental laws both simpler and more effective.