

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 5, 2006

**JUSTICE ANNE M. BURKE TO BE SWORN IN TO ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT**

The Honorable Anne M. Burke will be sworn in on Thursday as the newest member of the Illinois Supreme Court, the third woman to ever sit on the state's highest tribunal.

Justice Burke, an Appellate Court judge in Illinois for nearly 11 years, will take the oath from Justice Charles E. Freeman, the most senior member of the Court, in a ceremony convened by Chief Justice Robert R. Thomas.

The ceremony is scheduled to begin at 10:30 a.m. Thursday, July 6, in the Richard J. Daley Center in Chicago in Courtroom 2005.

The Supreme Court, under authority of the Illinois Constitution, appointed Justice Burke to replace retiring Justice Mary Ann G. McMorrow, who, as Chief Justice, was the first woman to head a branch of government in Illinois. Justice McMorrow announced her retirement April 5 after more than 13 years on the Court and plans to continue a pioneering legal career spanning more than five decades that was punctuated by a number of firsts for women in Illinois.

Justice Burke's interim appointment runs until December, 2008. A subsequent 10-year term for the seat will be decided by election in 2008.

Justice Burke's legal career is as remarkable as it is unusual.

She began law school in 1980 with four children at home under 10 years of age. After receiving her law degree from the Illinois Institute of Technology-Chicago Kent College of Law in 1983, she opened a solo, neighborhood law office on the South Side at 51<sup>st</sup> and Talman. She practiced from that location from 1983 to 1994, representing the interests of children and families on issues of neglect, abuse, delinquency and parental custody. Her diverse solo practice also included criminal trial work.

She was named to the Illinois Court of Claims by former Gov. James R. Thompson in 1987, was re-appointed to the Court of Claims by former Gov. Jim Edgar in 1991, was appointed to the Appellate Court in 1995 and was elected to the Appellate Court in November 1996.

**MORE**

## **Justice Burke to be Sworn In Add One**

During her tenure on the Appellate Court from August 1995, Justice Burke authored 147 majority opinions and more than 1,100 unpublished opinions and orders under Supreme Court Rule 23.

“Justice Burke is a talented and experienced appellate judge, and she will be a valuable addition to the Court,” said Chief Justice Thomas. “Anne and I worked together on the Illinois Courts Commission, and I know her to be a smart and dedicated public servant. It will be a pleasure to work with her again.”

Justice Burke has served on numerous professional commissions and committees. She was special counsel for Child Welfare Services in the Republican administration of Governor Edgar, as well as a member of his Legislative Committee on Juvenile Justice. She was appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court to serve on its Special Commission on the Administration of Justice, the Board of Admissions to the Bar and the Illinois Courts Commission, which is the constitutionally created body to hear and prosecute disciplinary cases against sitting judges.

She also has sat on the Board of Directors and served as interim chairperson of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ National Review Board, which was commissioned to study sexual abuse in the Catholic Church. In that capacity, she made numerous presentations to private and public groups.

Even before her legal career, Justice Burke was active in public service, long a leading advocate of the young and the vulnerable.

She worked with mentally disabled children as a physical education teacher with the Chicago Park District, and from that experience went on to found the Chicago Special Olympics in 1968. She later served as a director of that organization as it grew to become the International Special Olympics represented in more than 160 countries.

Justice Burke graduated from Maria High School in May 1962, interrupted her college education to work with children under the auspices of the Chicago Park District and returned to receive her college degree in education from DePaul University in 1976. Four years later, she enrolled in law school.

She has received numerous awards and honors and has been involved in many civic and professional activities. She has written and lectured extensively on the subjects of children, the disabled and leadership.

At the installation ceremony, Bishop Timothy Lyne will give the invocation, the Burke Family will lead the Pledge of Allegiance. There will be remarks by former Gov. Thompson and former Chief Justice McMorrow. A benediction will follow by the Rev. James Meeks.