

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT APPOINTS RICHARD WILLIAM AUSTIN AS
CIRCUIT JUDGE**

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Supreme Court announced the appointment Thursday of prominent Chicago attorney Richard William Austin as a Circuit Court judge to the Sixth Subcircuit in Cook County.

Mr. Austin, who was admitted to practice before the Illinois Supreme Court in 1955, has vast litigation experience and represented and served on several governmental entities and commissions.

He has been very active in professional activities, including service as president of the Chicago Bar Association (1979-80); president of the National Conference of Bar Presidents (1988-89); chairman of the Illinois Institute for Continuing Legal Education (1986-87); and chairman of the District Admissions Committee for the U.S. District Court of the Northern District of Illinois (1982 to date).

He was an attorney with Winston & Strawn from 1957-1993; and then with Pretzel & Stouffer until he opened his own practice in 2000.

Mr. Austin was evaluated by several bar groups and was given the highest rating by the Chicago Bar Association, the Illinois State Bar Association and the Women's Bar Association.

He also was evaluated very favorably by a judicial screening commission established by Justice Mary Ann G. McMorrow, who recommended his appointment to the Court.

The committee's co-chairpersons are former U.S. District Court Judge Susan Getzendanner and former CBA President Kevin M. Forde.

"I am sure I speak for the entire committee in saying we are very pleased with the appointment of Mr. Austin to the Circuit Court bench," said Mr. Forde. "He is one of Chicago's most respected lawyers and he has a long career of public service."

Mr. Austin is a 1955 graduate of Northwestern University's School of Law and has appeared in federal courts in many states and participated in four cases reviewed by the U.S. Supreme Court.

He has experience in criminal and civil antitrust litigation, general commercial disputes, hospital peer review counseling and zoning and annexation cases.

Mr. Austin also has substantial arbitration and mediation experience; was chairman of the first mass transit district in Illinois (Chicago South Suburban Mass Transit District) and was a member of the Regional Transportation Authority. He also served as lecturer and author at the Northwestern University School of Law Corporate Counsel Institute and the Illinois Institute for Continuing Legal Education.

His appointment is effective May 30, 2001 and terminates Dec. 2, 2002.