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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **SUPREME COURT APPOINTS ROCKFORD ATTORNEY TO CIRCUIT COURT BENCH**

The Illinois Supreme Court announced Tuesday the appointment of Joseph G. McGraw, a well known Rockford attorney with extensive experience in criminal and civil matters, to fill a pending vacancy on the Circuit Court of the 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit.

Mr. McGraw's appointment to fill the at-large seat becomes effective Jan. 2, 2002 and terminates Dec. 2, 2002. He will fill the vacancy that will be created by the retirement of Circuit Judge Michael R. Morrison, who currently serves as chief judge of the 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit.

Judge Morrison's retirement takes effect on Dec. 31, 2001.

Under the Illinois Constitution, the Supreme Court has the authority to fill judicial vacancies that occur in the interim between elections.

Mr. McGraw has said he will be a candidate for the seat in the 2002 elections.

"My appointment to the Circuit Court is a welcome opportunity to return to full-time public service," said Mr. McGraw, a former assistant state's attorney in Winnebago and Warren counties. "I am humbled by the trust and confidence reposed in me by the Illinois Supreme Court in selecting me for the Circuit bench.

"In accepting this appointment, I am mindful of the legacy of 30 years of exemplary service by the Honorable Michael Morrison. I look forward to devoting my energies to serving the citizens of Boone and Winnebago counties during the term of my appointment and to presenting myself as a candidate for this seat in the 2002 elections."

Mr. McGraw is founder of the law office that bears his name and concentrates his civil practice in personal injury, medical malpractice, product liability, civil rights and insurance issues.

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Before founding The Law Office of Joseph G. McGraw, Ltd., in 1995, he was a partner in Turner & McGraw, which represented both plaintiffs and defendants in personal injury and medical malpractice cases.

He prosecuted numerous and all manner of criminal cases while an assistant from 1986 to 1989 in the Winnebago County State's Attorney's office, including drug crimes, gang crimes and homicides.

After graduating with honors from Northern Illinois University School of Law in 1985, Mr. McGraw worked for a short period in the Warren County State's Attorney's office.

He was an associate editor of the *Northern Illinois University Law Review* and participated in the National Moot Court Competition.

He received his B.A. degree from the University of Illinois at Champaign.

Mr. McGraw also has been active in professional and civic organizations.

He has been certified by the Illinois Supreme Court as a mediator in the Alternative Dispute Resolution Pilot Program for the 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit; and is former chairman of the Trial Section of the Winnebago County Bar Association

He was elected to the Winnebago County Board in 1998 and re-elected in 2000; and is chairman of the Legislative Committee, the Reapportionment Committee and the Rules Committee. He also is a member of the Public Works Committee and the Zoning Committee and has served on the Public Safety Committee.

Mr. McGraw is chairman of the Belvidere Outreach Ministry, which provides Boone County's poor and homeless families and youths with food, shelter and counseling. He also has been active with Rockford Community School; Rockford Area Youth for Christ Literacy Project; and Samaritan House.

He is married to the former Gail Marie Inskip and the couple has five children.