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## **JUSTICE GARMAN TO SPEAK AT ‘PEOPLE’S LAW SCHOOL’**

SPRINGFIELD – Illinois Supreme Court Justice Rita B Garman will be among featured speakers at an all-day event in Springfield this coming Saturday designed to educate citizens about various aspects of the law and legal problems.

The event is known as “People’s Law School” and will be held at Lincoln Library, 236 South 7<sup>th</sup> Street in Springfield Saturday, Sept. 29 from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. It is sponsored by the Sangamon County Bar Association in conjunction with the Illinois State Bar Association.

The day features attorneys and judges in five sessions covering various aspects of the law and legal concerns to everyday citizens. Topics to be covered are procedures for dissolving a marriage, and child custody and support; buying and selling real estate; landlord & tenant rights and wills, estates and trusts. The presenters are expressly admonished to speak in “laymen’s terms” and discard the legalese.

Justice Garman will talk about the structure of Illinois trial and appellate courts and the legal procedures required in certain kinds of matters ranging from felony and juvenile cases to traffic, misdemeanor and small claims cases. Her presentation is scheduled to begin at 2 p.m.

“Programs like these are very helpful to citizens wanting to learn about their court system and specific areas of the law that could affect their daily lives,” said Justice Garman. “The Sangamon County Bar Association and the Illinois State Bar Association are to be applauded for sponsoring and presenting such forums; and the citizens who attend them are to be congratulated as well for wanting to learn more about fundamental institutions and laws which are the bedrock of America.

“I look forward to taking part.”

Justice Garman is the newest member of the Supreme Court, taking office in February to replace the retired Justice Ben Miller. She is the second woman to sit on the Court and has been a pioneer in breaking down barriers to women in college, law school and the Illinois judiciary.

She has sat on the bench in Illinois for more than a quarter of a century: first as an associate judge from 1974 to 1986; then a Circuit Court judge from 1986 to 1995; and as an appellate judge from 1995 to the time of her appointment to the Supreme Court.

Justice Garman, 57, was one of a handful of women in the College of Commerce of the University of Illinois when she graduated in the Top 10 her class, and was named to the Bronze Table. She attended the College of Law, University of Iowa, where she received her Juris Doctor degree with distinction in 1968.

She began her legal career serving indigent clients with the Legal Aid Society, later worked with the Vermilion County State's Attorney's office, and was in private practice before becoming an associate judge.

As a judge, Justice Garman has played a prominent role in judicial education. She has served as faculty at numerous seminars and programs for Illinois judges and has been a member and chairperson of the Education Committee of the Illinois Judicial Conference, which drafted the Comprehensive Judicial Education Plan for Illinois judges.

She holds the Supreme Court seat from the Fourth Judicial District, which is composed of 30 counties across central Illinois.