

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 14, 2009

**SUPREME COURT TO HOLD MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR JUSTICES
HOWARD C. RYAN AND JOSEPH F. CUNNINGHAM**

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Supreme Court will hold a memorial service in honor of Justice Howard C. Ryan and Justice Joseph F. Cunningham on Wednesday, May 20, at 2 p.m. in the Courtroom of the Supreme Court in Springfield.

Chief Justice Thomas R. Fitzgerald, Justices Thomas L. Kilbride and Lloyd A. Karmeier will give opening remarks.

Paying tribute in remarks will be Retired Supreme Court Justice John J. Stamos, Chief Judge John P. Shonkwiler of the Sixth Judicial Circuit and attorney James R. Troupis. Justice Stamos served on the Supreme Court with both Justice Ryan and Justice Cunningham; Circuit Judge Shonkwiler began his judicial career in 1965, the same year as Justice Cunningham; and Mr. Troupis was a law clerk for Justice Ryan in 1978 and 1979.

Justice Ryan was elected to the Supreme Court from the Third Judicial District and served two terms until December 1990. He was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court from 1982 to 1985.

Among his many opinions was one which established that a worker may sue his employer for retaliatory discharge when the worker was terminated for asserting rights under the Workmen's Compensation Act. *Kelsay v. Motorola, Inc.*, 74 Ill 2d 172 (1978).

Justice Cunningham served twice by appointment on the Illinois Supreme Court. He was appointed to fill vacancies from the Fifth Judicial District in 1987-88 and again in 1991-92. He also served as Director of the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts in 1990 and 1991.

In one of the opinions he authored, the Supreme Court established the right for siblings to recover for loss of society under the wrongful death statute. *In re Estate of Finley*, 151 Ill 2nd 95 (1992).

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Memorial Service for Justices Ryan and Cunningham

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Justice Ryan was born in Tonica, Ill., on June 17, 1916. He attended LaSalle Peru Junior College and the University of Illinois. He received his law degree from the University of Illinois College of Law, and was licensed to practice law in Illinois in 1942.

Justice Ryan enlisted in the Army shortly after his admission to the bar, and served as a radio operator in the Army Air Corps, helping to ferry plans to India, Africa and England.

After his Army service, Justice Ryan practiced law in Decatur and Peru and served as a part time assistant state's attorney. He was elected County Judge of LaSalle County in 1954, Circuit Judge in 1957 and served as Chief Judge of the 13th Judicial Circuit in the 1960s.

Justice Ryan served on the Illinois Appellate Court, Third Judicial District, from 1968 to 1970. After retiring from the Supreme Court in 1990, Justice Ryan served three years as counsel to the law firm of Peterson and Ross.

He passed away December 10, 2008. Preceded in death by his wife, Helen, he is survived by two children and five grandchildren.

Justice Cunningham was born in East St. Louis on February 25, 1924. He received his B.A. degree from the University of Dayton, Ohio, and his J.D. degree from Washington University Law School in St. Louis. He was admitted to the bars of Illinois and Missouri in 1952.

After engaging in the private practice of law, Justice Cunningham began his judicial career in 1965 in the 20th Judicial Circuit where he served as Magistrate, Associate Judge and Circuit Judge. He served as Chief Judge of the Circuit from 1975 to 1984 and in 1987. He also served as Chairman of the Conference of Chief Circuit Judges.

Justice Cunningham passed away July 13, 2008 and is survived by his wife, Mary, two children, two grandchildren and a step-grandchild.

A video recording of the ceremony will be available on the Court's website by May 21 or May 22 at www.state.il.us/court.

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(FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: Joseph Tybor, press secretary to the Illinois Supreme Court, at 312.793.2323)