

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT APPOINTS PEORIA COUNTY STATE'S
ATTORNEY TO 10TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT**

The Illinois Supreme Court announced Tuesday that Kevin W. Lyons, longtime state's attorney for Peoria County, has been appointed a Circuit Court judge to fill a judicial vacancy in the 10th Judicial Circuit.

Chief Justice Thomas L. Kilbride recommended Mr. Lyons to the Supreme Court after an extensive application and evaluation process.

The Peoria resident Circuit Court vacancy was created by the 2010 retirement of Judge Richard Grawey and is temporarily being filled by Judge Glenn Collier who left retirement to fill the position.

Under the Illinois Constitution, the Supreme Court is given the authority to fill judicial vacancies on an interim basis, and Chief Justice Thomas L. Kilbride recommended Mr. Lyons' appointment to the Supreme Court after completion of the application process, which included review by a special 17-person screening committee.

"My legal career has always involved the courtrooms of Illinois and I'm privileged the Chief Justice and the Supreme Court are providing me an opportunity to continue there in a new and different role," said Mr. Lyons. "Peoria County voters took a chance on me to be their state's attorney 23 years ago and it's been the job of my dreams.

"I sincerely appreciate that Chief Justice Kilbride and his fellow justices are now placing in me their confidence to continue serving the citizens of Illinois as a circuit judge."

The appointment is effective August 1, 2011, and terminates December 3, 2012 when it will be filled by the results of the 2012 general election. Mr. Lyons has indicated he will run for election.

"Of the outstanding candidates our committee reviewed, Kevin Lyons stood out for his experience and administrative abilities," said Peoria attorney Timothy Bertschy, co-chair of the screening committee. "As State's Attorney for many years, he has made difficult but fair decisions on significant legal cases and has established a distinguished record of public service."

Mr. Lyons has been Peoria County state's attorney since December 1988, having been elected to six, uninterrupted four-year terms. He is an experienced trial lawyer and administrator. He has served as lead counsel in more than 70 criminal cases that have been tried to verdict before a jury, and has been

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involved in hundreds of additional non-jury cases that have gone to judgment. He has managed an office of more than 30 attorneys and a similar number of support staff with a budget of \$3.8 million.

Mr. Lyons has been a frequent lecturer and teacher. He has presented trial advocacy trainings in more than 30 states. He has been an instructor for appellate prosecutors; has taught ethics to Illinois prosecutors; and has presented lectures on prosecuting murder cases, sex assault cases, evidence and office administration for the National District Attorneys Association.

He has been active in several professional groups, having been president of the Illinois State's Attorneys Association and serving currently as chairman of the State's Attorneys Appellate Prosecutor Board of Governors. He also has served as president of the Association of Government Attorneys in Capital Litigation, which establishes certification for the training of prosecutors who handle capital cases.

Mr. Lyons also has been active in the Illinois State Bar Association, the National District Attorneys Association, and has been a longtime member of the American Bar Association and the Peoria County Bar Association.

Mr. Lyons received his *juris doctor* from Drake University Law School in 1981 and was admitted to practice law in Illinois in the same year. From May 1981 to December 1988 he engaged in solo practice, maintaining a principal office in Peoria with a satellite office in his hometown, Hanna City.

As a private attorney, he also was hired by the Chief Public Defender as an assistant public defender handling both misdemeanor and felonies from 1981 to 1988.

Mr. Lyons has served on the Board of Trustees of his alma mater, Judson University in Elgin, Ill., and has served as co-chair of the Illinois Commission on Prisoner Re-Entry.

Chief Justice Kilbride uses an extensive application, evaluation and interview process to make recommendations to the Supreme Court for judicial vacancies in the Third Judicial District. As part of the evaluation process, Chief Justice Kilbride had publicly asked for and taken applications for Judge Grawey's vacancy, and seven persons applied. Chief Justice Kilbride also sought written comments about the candidates from the community. The evaluation process also included background checks by police authorities and with the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission.

A survey of all attorneys residing in the 10th Judicial Circuit was conducted by the Illinois State Bar Association. The attorneys were surveyed on their opinions of the applicants' integrity, temperament, legal ability, management skills and other professional qualifications.

Chief Justice Kilbride also appointed a 17-person judicial screening committee made up of representatives from the community, including non-lawyers as well as members of the legal profession, who evaluated the credentials of the applicants.

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