

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Fritchey to Seek Cook County Board Seat *Claypool & Quigley Endorse Fritchey as Needed Reform Voice*

CHICAGO – In a significant political announcement, State Rep. John Fritchey stated that he will not seek re-election to the General Assembly seat that he has held since 1996, opting to run to fill the vacancy created by Cook County Commissioner Forrest Claypool, who has announced he will not be running for another term. Congressman Mike Quigley and Commissioner Claypool joined Rep. Fritchey at his announcement and pledged their full support of Fritchey's bid, citing the need for the County Board to have a proven reformer who can hit the ground running.

Rep. Fritchey was first elected to the Illinois House in 1996, representing a district including Bucktown, DePaul, Roscoe Village, Lakeview, and Ravenswood. The former Illinois Assistant Attorney General has been the Chairman of the House Civil Judiciary Committee for the past seven years. He previously chaired the House Consumer Protection Committee.

During his legislative tenure, Fritchey has been an unwavering reform leader in Springfield, having authored and sponsored numerous ethics and campaign finance reform laws. Milestone accomplishments include his work with then-State Senator Barack Obama to pass the Ethics Act of 2003 and more recently, the enactment of a law to finally ban 'pay-to-play' politics in Illinois.

A vocal critic of both former Governors George Ryan and Rod Blagojevich, Fritchey was a member of the Special Investigative Committee that drafted the impeachment resolution against Blagojevich.

“When I first arrived in Springfield, nobody really wanted to take on the fight to reform state government,” said Fritchey. “There were a lot of uphill battles and even resentment, but I persisted and slowly but surely, we started fixing a very broken system. And while there's definitely still work to be done, the good news is that there are a lot more legislators now willing and able to do it.”

By contrast, Fritchey stated that the recent departure of former-Commissioner Quigley, who defeated Fritchey in a Special Primary this past March to succeed Congressman Rahm Emanuel, and Commissioner Claypool's decision not to seek reelection, have created an urgent need for reform leadership on the Cook County Board. Talks among the three elected officials convinced Fritchey to give up his seniority in the House to run for the Board.

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“Now more than ever, we need a proven reformer with the common-sense, experience, and willingness to take on the big issues,” said Congressman Quigley. “The times demand and the voters deserve elected officials like John Fritchey who will challenge the status quo and fight for taxpayers. Reforming government saves us money, and amidst the greatest economic downturn in a generation, we can’t afford not to keep working for change. John will be a terrific addition to the Board and a fitting successor to our friend Forrest Claypool.”

Working together to fix county government is nothing new for the three officials. Over the years, Fritchey, Quigley, and Claypool have joined forces to take on initiatives including the elimination of pension abuses by county officials, as well as trying to lower the number of votes needed to override a veto by the Board President – an issue looming large as the Board once again tries to roll back the recent county sales tax hike.

“Even when the odds were against us, I’m proud to have been able to accomplish a great deal at the County,” said Commissioner Claypool. “John has had a similar experience at the State, and so he is ideally-suited to not just carry on, but build upon, the work Mike and I have done on the County Board. When it comes to fighting for taxpayers and cleaning up Cook County, John Fritchey is the clear choice to become the next Commissioner for the 12th District.”

“Just like nature, reform abhors a vacuum,” said Fritchey. “Mike and Forrest have been groundbreaking reformers at the County level, and with the loss of their two key board votes, we need to make sure that taxpayers are getting responsible and effective government for their dollars. Serving on the County Board will provide an opportunity to continue my past work and bring it closer to home. Whether it is property tax reform, increased transparency and accountability, or environmental initiatives, there will be no shortage of important issues to take on.”

“I am as proud of my record and my ideas as I am to receive the support of these two County reform pioneers,” said Fritchey. “I’m looking forward to making a very compelling case to the voters and starting this next chapter of public service.”

The Primary Election will take place in February 2010.