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**Alderman Toni Preckwinkle, Candidate for Cook
County Board President Forms Candidate Coalition;
Committed to Bringing About Reform and
Modernizing the Cook County Health System**

***Reform Candidates for Cook County Board Will Work Together to
Modernize Cook County Hospital System and Improve Services***

CHICAGO – Cook County Board of Commissioner Candidates Alderman Toni Preckwinkle, State Representative John Fritchey and Dr. Victor Forsys today joined forces plan to express their commitment to bringing about reform to the Cook County Board and the Cook County Health System into the 21st Century.

For too long, the Cook County Hospital System has been neglected at the hands of inept elected officials who were more concerned with providing patronage jobs within the hospital system than improving the quality of care and services to patients. The citizens of Cook County who utilize the hospital system have been those who suffer. As a coalition, Preckwinkle, Fritchey, and Forsys will work to bring about the needed reforms at the County Board.

First, the coalition will work to make the independent health board permanent which will increase the effectiveness of the board and assist them in bringing about real reform.

"I am the only Board President candidate who has pledged to make permanent the independent Board of Directors," said Preckwinkle. "

"Making permanent the Independent Board is the first, critical step reducing the political influence that has been detrimental to the efficiency and quality of services for our residents, as well as disastrous to the morale of the health care professionals who work so hard to provide quality care."

Second, we will work to create more transparency within the entire system and implement auditing and accounting practices that will improve accountability and use taxpayers' dollars more efficiently.

"Whether the issue is improving our health care system, more efficient use of taxpayer dollars or greater transparency in government operations, it is clear that it is time to take Cook County government in a better direction," stated Rep. Fritchey, Candidate for Cook County Board in the

12th District. "In one week, voters throughout Cook County have an excellent opportunity to elect new members to the Board and a new Board President who are prepared to do just that."

Third, the candidates will foster a working relationship with the independent health board that will be productive and will work to create a system that will meet the needs of the shifting population in Cook County.

"I will be the only medical doctor on the County Board which has the ultimate oversight over the County Hospital System and its \$1 billion budget. I vow to use my medical expertise to work with the independent board to create a better system for the citizens of Cook County," said Dr. Victor Forys, County Board Candidate in the 17th District.

Finally, the coalition will work to adopt modern accounting and billing practices to fix the financing within the Cook County Hospital System.

"I've said all along that government at all levels has two obligations: to provide good services and to do so effectively and efficiently. Right now, the County is failing on both accounts", said Alderman Preckwinkle. "Ensuring public health is a fundamental responsibility of Cook County government. The responsibility is two fold – monitoring and addressing public health issues, and ensuring that all county residents have access to quality health care. As Cook County Board President I will remain committed to improving both the efficiency and effectiveness of the County Health System."