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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 1, 2006
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U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE TO CONDUCT ELECTION DAY MONITORING

ELECTION DAY HOTLINE: (312) 469-6157

CHICAGO -- Consistent with a long-standing practice of the office, the U.S. Attorney's Office will monitor the general election in Chicago and surrounding suburbs on Tuesday, Nov. 7, 2006, Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, announced today. As part of the monitoring effort, the office will operate a hotline for candidates or the public to call to report any complaints relating to voting. In addition, Assistant U.S. Attorneys will be available to respond to complaints as needed.

The hotline number is **(312) 469-6157**.

"This office has a long tradition of monitoring the polls on election day," Mr. Fitzgerald said. "Our goal is to ensure the integrity of the balloting process. We must ensure that those who are entitled to vote may do so, while those who seek to corrupt elections are brought to justice."

Coordination of the monitoring efforts and subsequent investigations, if any, will be directed by Assistant U.S. Attorney Gillum Ferguson. The Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the U.S. Marshal's Service will assist in this effort by following up, if necessary, on any election fraud complaints.

Complaints about ballot access problems or discrimination can also be made directly to the Civil Rights Division's Voting Section in Washington at 1-800-253-3931 or 202-307-2767.

Violations of federal voting rights statutes carry penalties ranging from 1 to 10 years imprisonment and fines up to \$250,000.

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