



OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Contact:  
Bryant Payne (312) 603-5690  
[bdpayne@cookcountycourt.com](mailto:bdpayne@cookcountycourt.com)

**Dorothy Brown Joins the Italian American Human Relations Foundation to Urge President Bush and the U.S. Congress to Sustain Voting Rights Act for All Americans**

CHICAGO (May 19, 2006) – The Honorable Dorothy Brown, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County, and the Italian American Human Relations Foundation, along with other elected officials, community and civic organizations of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds are hosting a “Keeping the Promise of the Voting Rights Act” press conference and breakfast reception at Hotel Allegro, 171 W. Randolph St., on Wednesday, May 24, 2006 at 10 a.m.

Former United States (U.S.) President Lyndon B. Johnson made the following statement during the Voting Rights Act signing on August 6, 1965, “Until every qualified person regardless of...the color of his skin has the right, unquestioned and unrestrained, to go in and cast his ballot in every precinct in this great land of ours, I am not going to be satisfied.”

**President Johnson’s statement exemplifies why concerned members of the community and political realm are coming together to urge the U.S. Congress and President George W. Bush to extend or make permanent the sections of the Voting Rights Act that will expire in 2007. Americans understand that protecting this Act is just as important as it was 40 years ago because of the recent displacement of citizens due to natural disasters and the re-districting of neighborhoods in states throughout the country.**

It has been stated that, “The Declaration of Independence was the ‘Promise’ and the U.S. Constitution was supposed to be the fulfillment of that ‘Promise.’ Therefore, as an African-American elected official, I am concerned that if the non-permanent sections of the Voting Rights Act are let to expire, the Promise will never be fulfilled,” said Clerk Brown. “I am honored to join the Italian American Human Relations Foundation, other elected officials and noteworthy groups as our combined efforts facilitate the federal government’s understanding of the need to uphold the decree of equal justice for all through either extending or making permanent all sections of the Voting Rights Act.”

“Former U.S. Congressmen Frank Annunzio of Chicago, IL and Peter Rodino Jr. of Newark, NJ led the Italian-American delegation in the 1965 Voting Rights Act because their grandparents and parents were subject to discrimination when they came to the U.S.,” said Louis Rago, President of the Italian American Human Relations Foundation. “The Italian-American delegation was proud to support former President Johnson and the African-American community in getting the Act signed.

“Today, the Italian American Human Relations Foundation is pleased to partner with Clerk Brown, other elected officials and organizations as we ensure that the voting rights of all Americans are equal.”

###