



OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 10, 2014

Press Contact:
Jalyne R. Strong
(312) 603-5690
jrstrong@cookcountycourt.com

**Sun-Times Reporter Omits Important Facts in
Article on Automation in the Clerk's Office**

**But Clerk Brown is Happy that Justice System Stakeholders are
Now Onboard with Integrated Justice Initiatives**

(Chicago) Important information about automation initiatives and criminal justice information integration efforts pioneered by Honorable Dorothy Brown, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County, was omitted from the article, "No way to paper over court clerk's record-keeping: critics," by Brian Slodysko in the *Chicago Sun-Times* on July 4, 2014.

The Clerk's Office provided Slodysko with a 12-page document on June 3, 2014, that outlined **more than 125 office system automations completed by Clerk Brown** during her tenure in Office, from 2000-2014. Yet, Slodysko vaguely refers to only the Imaging and Document Management System (IDMS), through which more than 100 million court documents have already been scanned into digital format; the electronic docket, which is automatically updated in real time, making almost all civil case type information searchable online; and the Electronic Filing system, which has attracted more than 23,000 registered users since its expansion to six out of seven civil case types.

Slodysko blames his editor Steve Warmbir for the scarcity of information, saying that his article was "cut down substantially."

On April 23, 2014, the *Sun-Times* reporter was also provided with an explanatory statement and two comprehensive documents about Clerk Brown's leadership role in the **Cook County Integrated Criminal Justice Information System (CCCJIS) Committee**; but there is no reference to this information at all in the article. Moreover, Slodysko failed to interview the Chief Information Officers involved in Cook County criminal justice information sharing efforts; but instead talked to staff that are obviously totally uninformed of the progress that's been made.

In part, the April 23rd statement reads, "For 13 years, Clerk Brown has worked to improve the processes of integrated criminal justice and information sharing among criminal justice agencies through the Cook County Integrated Criminal Justice Information System (CCICJIS) Committee that she championed to be established from the time she took Office in 2000.

Under Clerk Brown's direction, CCICJIS produced two comprehensive documents, A Strategic Plan and a Detailed Plan of Action, which together provide an extensive blueprint for the implementation of an

innovative system of information sharing across criminal justice agencies. Clerk Brown chairs the CCICJIS committee.

Over the years, Clerk Brown has pushed to get funding and the cooperation of all of the stakeholders, in order to proceed with the implementation of an electronic, integrated criminal justice information system.

Now that the criminal justice stakeholders appear to understand the merits of justice agencies being able to electronically share information, and President Preckwinkle is allocating funds and staff to support the effort, Clerk Brown is eager to work with the stakeholders to complete the process of a fully integrated criminal justice information system that she set in motion years ago.

The Court Clerk's Office is now in the midst of a Needs Analysis that is being conducted to spec out a brand new Criminal, Traffic, and Civil Case Management System. This Needs Analysis will ensure that information sharing is maximized.

The issue of public safety is uppermost for Clerk Brown and that is why over the years she has been, and continues to be, committed to working with all of the heads of criminal justice agencies to implement an integrated criminal justice information system.”

Additionally, Slodysko neglected to include in his coverage of Clerk's Office automation programs, information supplied to him about other projects being spearheaded by Clerk Brown and the CCICJIS Committee, such as: the Clerk's Office's and Sheriff's Mittimus project, which is the process of automating the capture and transmittal of Mittimus information to the Sheriff's Office; the CCICJIS Committee members agreeing to use the “BUS” technology as a means for information sharing and integrated justice; the expansion of Electronic Filing (e-Filing) to all civil areas throughout the Clerk's Office as a major advancement toward making all court records electronic; the Interactive Court Order System through which criminal court judges will create orders electronically; and, the eTicket project that already has many Cook County police agencies electronically creating and transmitting traffic tickets to the Clerk's Office.

All of these and other e-Court initiatives underway in the Clerk's Office are geared toward Clerk Brown's goal of establishing a “paperless” court system that utilizes electronic court records, and a fully integrated, criminal justice information system in Cook County.

“I'm just, as the song says, ‘HAPPY,’” Clerk Brown notes, “that SOME OF THE stakeholders' REPRESENTATIVES ALSO finally GET IT, as evidenced by THEIR statements quoted in Slodysko's article; especially since some of the problems mentioned, such as the release of prisoners, happened due to the lack of the integrated system I advocated a long time ago.”

Clerk Brown is also “HAPPY” that Commissioner John Fritchey, Chairman of the Cook County Technology Committee, finds the lack of an integrated system “laughable,” because, she says, “That means he will work extra hard to help effect the goal of a completely integrated criminal justice system in Cook County through adequate funding and advocacy.”

And, maybe one day, Clerk Brown can also be “HAPPY,” that Sun-Times reporters and their editors will decide to give their readers the whole story on the many technological advances made under her administration.