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**TRIBUNE ENDORSEMENTS: CAMPAIGN `06**

## Endorsements for Illinois Senate

October 26, 2006

The Chicago Tribune today begins its endorsements in contested races for the Illinois Senate.

**1st District (Near Southwest Side):** With the expected departure of Assistant Majority Leader Miguel del Valle to be Chicago city clerk, Sen. Antonio "Tony" Munoz is in line for leadership. It's good to have a police officer in the legislature, and Munoz is liked by colleagues. But his close ties with the Hispanic Democratic Organization, which has been linked to patronage abuses, give cause for concern. Munoz faces two opponents. We disagree with many of the ideas from Green Party candidate Dorian Breuer, a former member of the Citizens Utility Board, but he would shake things up. He's endorsed. Rose Pappas of Chicago is the Republican candidate.

**3rd District (Near North Side, Loop and Near South Side):** Democratic Sen. Mattie Hunter has been sued by the City of Chicago for numerous alleged housing-code violations involving at least 10 properties she owns. She also works for the city--in the Department of Human Services. Republican Chad Jackson Surles, a Chicago developer, is endorsed.

**4th District (Far West Side and near west suburbs):** Sen. Kimberly A. Lightford seems to be developing into a more credible legislator. Colleagues, though, say the Democrat likes to take more credit than she has earned for legislation. As chair of the Senate Education Committee, Lightford could play a key role in fostering a long-term plan to reform the way Illinois funds schools. Lightford's opponent, Republican Antoinette Ruback, doesn't register even a blip on the radar screen. Lightford is endorsed.

**6th District (North Side):** Co-chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, a leader on substantive issues such as reforming the death penalty system and rewriting the state's criminal code, Democratic Sen. John Cullerton is one of the hardest-working and most-thoughtful members of the General Assembly. He is endorsed over Republican William S. Hackney, an attorney.

**7th District (North Side):** Democratic Sen. Carol Ronen is Gov. Rod Blagojevich's closest ally in the Senate. That puts her in the tough position of defending some of his riskier moves. But she's a solid lawmaker and is endorsed over Republican Frank Thomas, a businessman.

**13th District (South Side):** It isn't easy to follow a rock star, but Sen. Kwame Raoul has done an admirable job in the seat once occupied by U.S. Sen. Barack Obama. Raoul, a former senior staff attorney for Chicago City Colleges, is a thoughtful leader on the Higher Education and Judiciary Committees. He builds consensus on issues that matter to his district. Raoul faces the Doogie Howser of this political season: Republican Charles Field Kinzer, a University of Chicago economics major. It's not clear if he's running for votes or course credit. Asked about his opponent, Kinzer

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concedes: "I think he's a fine candidate." Enough said. Raoul is endorsed.

16th District (Southwest Side and near southwest suburbs): Democratic incumbent Jacqueline "Jacqui" Y. Collins has taken a lead in cracking down on mortgage scammers and the payday-loan industry. For her hard work and tenacity, Collins is endorsed over Republican Matthew Szydakis of Chicago.

19th District (southwest suburbs): It's not the style of Democratic Sen. Maggie Crotty to make waves in the legislature. But this last year she worked hard behind the scenes with Republican Rep. Ruth Munson to help thousands of mobile home residents who faced steep rent increases. Republican Eric Wallace is a minister and an adjunct religion professor. Crotty gets the nod.

22nd District (western suburbs): Republican Billie Diane Roth is the mayor of Streamwood, but she has great difficulty answering questions about how to handle school funding and end the culture of sleaze in Illinois. Democrat Michael Noland of Elgin, an attorney, is a stronger choice to replace GOP Sen. Steve Rauschenberger. Noland is thoughtful and willing to express his differences with party leadership.

25th District (far west suburbs): Republican Sen. Chris Lauzen's odd and abrasive manner has turned off even some fellow Republicans. He criticizes wasteful state spending on pork, but secured \$10,000 for stained-glass windows in a Naperville parking garage. A few years ago he tried to change his legal name to Christopher J. Lauzen, CPA. It's time for change. Frank Craig, a senior business development manager in the online travel industry, said he would focus on developing bio-fuels and renewable energy technologies in his area. Craig, a Democrat from Aurora, is endorsed.

27th District (northwest suburbs): Voters here are fortunate to have two strong candidates to succeed retiring GOP Sen. Wendell Jones. Democrat Peter Gutzmer, a firefighter and paramedic from Hoffman Estates, has a sophisticated understanding of a variety of state issues. Republican Matt Murphy of Palatine, an attorney and Harper College trustee, also has the smarts to be an effective legislator and vigilant watchdog of state finances. Murphy better reflects the political leanings of this district and is endorsed.

30th District (far north suburbs): Democratic Sen. Terry Link earned kudos for the successful negotiation of a worker's compensation reform bill in 2005, which required agreement between business and labor interests. Link is endorsed over Republican Charles Fitzgerald of North Chicago.

31st District (far north suburbs): Democrat Michael Bond of Grayslake, a director of corporate finance for Allstate, is a bright, young newcomer to the political scene. So why was he so testy and evasive in an endorsement interview? Perhaps a few more years of seasoning on his local school board will help Bond lose some of the attitude. Suzanne D. Simpson, the Warren Township supervisor, defeated veteran GOP Sen. Adeline Geo-Karis in the primary. Simpson, also from Grayslake, would bring more energy to Springfield. She would make a welcome push for consolidation of school districts and would be active on local issues. Simpson is endorsed.

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