

# NEWS

*from the Illinois House of Representatives*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
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## **STATEMENT FROM SPEAKER MICHAEL J. MADIGAN ON THE FORMATION OF A HOUSE IMPEACHMENT COMMITTEE**

**SPRINGFIELD, IL** — House Speaker Michael J. Madigan on Monday issued the following statement:

I have allowed Governor Rod Blagojevich six days to resign his office. It would appear as of this morning that he has declined to do so. Therefore, it is my intention to appoint a special committee to begin immediately an investigation into the governor's conduct in office, and to undertake the preparatory work that is a prerequisite to an impeachment proceeding in the Illinois House.

The committee will be made up of 21 members, 12 Democrats and nine Republicans, a balance that approximates the partisan composition of the House in the 95<sup>th</sup> and 96<sup>th</sup> General Assemblies; Democratic members will be selected by the Speaker, Republican ones by the Minority Leader. House Majority Leader Barbara Flynn Currie (D-Chicago) has been selected as the committee's chair. On the Democratic side, members appointed to the committee are current representatives who have been elected to at least six terms and who will serve in the next General Assembly, which begins on January 14, 2009. David Ellis, my chief legal counsel, will serve as special counsel to the committee. Judge Alan Greiman (ret.) will serve as my special legal counsel on the impeachment matter.

The committee will call witnesses to provide testimony in subject areas that include, but are not limited to: official misconduct alleged by the United States Attorney's Office; abuses of office; acts performed without legal authority; and failure to comply with state laws and lawful requests for information from the General Assembly. We are prepared to seek the cooperation of the United States Department of Justice and all other appropriate federal law enforcement agencies to gain access to any materials relevant to the House impeachment investigation. We will also extend invitations to the governor and his staff to testify before the committee.

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So that it may complete its work in as expeditious a manner as possible, beginning Tuesday at noon the committee will work every day with the exception of Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. Hearings will be held in Committee Room 114 at the Capitol. Audio and video will be available on the General Assembly's website, [www.ilga.gov](http://www.ilga.gov). More details regarding how the committee will proceed with its business will be available when the committee convenes tomorrow.

Despite the high emotions of the moment, exacerbated by the unprecedented nature of the economic challenges facing Illinois and the urgent need for concerted government action to address them, it is imperative to not lose sight of the fact that we are a nation of laws. Due process rights, even for those accused of shocking crimes, must be preserved and not sacrificed for expediency's sake. The integrity of the General Assembly as an institution, the nature of the precedent established by these proceedings, and the judgment of history demand that we not allow passion and anger to overtake our fidelity to the constitution and the rule of law.

At the same time, while House members respect the due process protections afforded by the state and federal constitutions for those facing criminal charges in our courts of law, those rights do not preempt the responsibilities of the General Assembly to act under Article 4, Section 14 of the Illinois Constitution. Furthermore, it is important to note that constitutional provision expressly states, "an impeached officer whether convicted or acquitted shall be liable to prosecution, trial, judgment and punishment according to law." In plain terms, criminal prosecutions and impeachments are two separate processes that may proceed concurrently and independently of one another.

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