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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Because former United States Senator Peter Fitzgerald was a Republican, a member of the same political party as President George W. Bush, the duty of choosing a candidate for the job of United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois was his responsibility; and

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WHEREAS, Illinois has a well-earned and long-standing national reputation of politicians of both political parties who engage in flagrant public corruption, abuse of the people's trust, and cronyism; and

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WHEREAS, This unfortunate legacy of bipartisan, personal dishonesty, and public corruption is epitomized by George Ryan and Rod Blagojevich, two individuals whose words and actions leave a stench in the nostrils of honorable men and women; and

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WHEREAS, It was necessary that former United States Senator Peter Fitzgerald act boldly and courageously to shake up the political establishment and its endemic culture of corruption by choosing an independent person of impeccable integrity and honor; and

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WHEREAS, Senator Fitzgerald came under intense criticism by many, with some of the most fierce criticism coming from

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1 within his own political party, for breaking the age-old
2 tradition of naming a prominent Chicago-area attorney to this
3 position; and

4 WHEREAS, Senator Fitzgerald displayed his willingness to
5 act with great courage, follow the dictates of his well-formed
6 conscience, and do the right thing with no regard for adverse
7 political consequences; and

8 WHEREAS, One notable example of this courage was when he
9 held-up the federal funding in the United States Senate for the
10 construction of the Abraham Lincoln Museum until he was assured
11 that taxpayer money would not be ill-spent by the awarding of
12 construction contracts through sweetheart deals to political
13 contributors and influence peddlers in Springfield; and

14 WHEREAS, Senator Fitzgerald again stood tall when he called
15 upon then-sitting Governor George Ryan, a member of his own
16 political party, not to seek re-election because Ryan had
17 become a moral, ethical, and political embarrassment; and

18 WHEREAS, At the press conference introducing his choice for
19 U.S. Attorney, Senator Fitzgerald stated, "I didn't have a set
20 opinion going into this as to whether the candidate should be
21 from in State or from out of State, but I was determined that
22 the candidate be somebody who is independent and not an

1 insider. I think that the best person is someone who has no
2 connections, no alliances and is not beholden to anyone. I
3 found no one who was better than Pat Fitzgerald."; and

4 WHEREAS, Patrick Fitzgerald came from humble, working
5 class roots, with both of his parents having emigrated from
6 Ireland; Patrick won a scholarship to attend a prestigious
7 Jesuit high school in New York and worked his way through
8 Amherst College where he made Phi Beta Kappa and later
9 graduated from Harvard with a degree in law; when he worked in
10 the office of the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of
11 New York, he prosecuted a major heroin smuggling ring and
12 helped convict four members of the Gambino crime family on
13 racketeering and murder charges; he also helped prosecute the
14 terrorists involved in the World Trade Center bombing as well
15 as those responsible for the bombing of U.S. embassies in
16 Africa; and

17 WHEREAS, Patrick Fitzgerald was once described by a friend
18 as, "Elliot Ness with a Harvard Law Degree and a sense of
19 humor. He just cares passionately about chasing down bad guys";
20 and

21 WHEREAS, FBI Director Louis Freeh recommended Patrick
22 Fitzgerald when Senator Fitzgerald asked for names of the best
23 federal prosecutors in the country; and

1 WHEREAS, U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald has proven to be
2 an exceptional choice for U.S. Attorney, has displayed a high
3 standard of independence, hard work and integrity, set clear
4 priorities for and re-energized the office, and most
5 importantly has fearlessly sought to root out public
6 corruption; therefore, be it

7 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL
8 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
9 CONCURRING HEREIN, that Senator Peter Fitzgerald rejected this
10 political status quo, boldly spoke out against abuses of the
11 public trust, and by the appointment of Patrick Fitzgerald to
12 the office of U.S. Attorney, has left a legacy of honesty,
13 integrity, and intolerance for corruption that will serve to
14 restore the public trust in Illinois State government; and be
15 it further

16 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
17 delivered to former United States Senator Peter Fitzgerald.