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PRESS RELEASE

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DILLARD ANNOUNCES RUN FOR ILLINOIS GOVERNOR

*Cites ethics, economics and education as main concerns;
pledges to put "Taxpayers First"*

HINSDALE – Citing his frustration with the governor and General Assembly's inability to accomplish the most fundamental responsibilities—including passing a balanced budget—State Senator Kirk Dillard (R-Hinsdale) today announced his candidacy for governor. The announcement was made in his hometown where his father was a high school teacher for more than three decades and near where his mother served as a surgical nurse in a veterans' hospital.

"Illinois taxpayers have been facing the consequences of a leadership void in Springfield for nearly a decade," Dillard stated. "For too long, we've been experiencing second-rate goals and short-sighted decision making. We need to expect more from our leaders and put programs and discipline in place to deliver better results."

Dillard was adamant about the budget crisis facing state government.

"At no time in this nation's history has a state taxed itself into prosperity," Dillard said. "Clearly, our most vulnerable citizens deserve our compassion and are a top priority for precious state resources. At the same time, we have to learn to first keep the commitments we've made before going on a spending spree where future generations will receive the bills. Putting taxpayers first is not a cliché—it's good government."

Dillard said that his administration would also demand accountability at all levels of government and promote ethics and campaign reform to help eliminate the state's sordid past.

"I was the Chief Sponsor of Illinois' first major campaign finance and ethics reform legislation in a quarter century," Dillard said. "We cannot allow the good work of Patrick Collins and others who developed reform initiative go to waste. Illinois citizens shouldn't have to wait a day longer to end the state's political disgraceful performance."

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Dillard pointed out that state spending over the past two decades has increased by \$6 billion—nearly 400 percent over the Consumer Price Index of the same period.

Noting that Illinois currently ranks 48th in the nation in job creation, Dillard pledged to work with Illinois business and labor leaders to develop the nation’s most aggressive economic development initiative to help make this state a “destination economy.”

“I’m tired of seeing other states hold press conferences to announce big plant openings while we seem to only get bad news,” said Dillard. “The key to retaining and growing jobs doesn’t lie only in tax incentives, but also in finding a way to contain such frictional costs as workers’ compensation and unemployment insurance. Illinois should be the leader in job growth, not near dead last like we are now.”

Dillard also announced that he would soon release his education initiative called *Best in Class* and his plans to continue the reform of state government.

Born in Chicago on June 1, 1955, Kirk Dillard grew up in Hinsdale where his father was a high school teacher and his mother served as a nurse at the local veterans’ hospital. Kirk remains in Hinsdale today with his wife, Stephanie, and their daughters Emma and Ava. Educated in local public schools, Sen. Dillard was an honors graduate of Western Illinois University in Macomb and DePaul University College of Law in Chicago, where he serves on its Dean’s Advisory Council.

Kirk Dillard has had the rare experience to serve in all three branches of state government. He was a Judge for the Illinois Court of Claims, Chief of Staff for Governor Jim Edgar, Director of Legislative Affairs for Governor James Thompson, and was elected a State Senator in 1994.

In addition to a number of programs and initiatives planned during his administration, Dillard pledged to bring civility and respect to the Office of Governor.

“I join other taxpayers with being sick and tired of the super-charged partisan atmosphere in Springfield,” Dillard stated. “Our founding fathers had strongly held beliefs that often were at odds with others, but they found a way to use those areas of disagreement to fuel public discourse and further the birth of a nation. The days of Adams and Franklin may be gone, but the need for a more civil approach is long past due. Getting along with colleagues from both sides of the aisle is something that I’ve always strived to maintain—and helped me to achieve great results, such as the first true ethics reform package in a quarter century.”

Kirk Dillard is a Partner at the Chicago law firm of Locke Lord Bissell & Liddell LLP.

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