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FROM THE OFFICE OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE KAREN A. YARBROUGH

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For More Information:
State Rep. Karen Yarbrough
(708) 615-1747

Yarbrough Statement on Federal Government's Lawsuit Against Chicago's Vacant Property Cleanup Ordinance

BROADVIEW, IL – On Tuesday, Assistant House Majority Leader Karen Yarbrough (D-Maywood), Chair of the House Special Committee on Housing, issued the following statement in response to a lawsuit filed by the Federal Housing Finance Agency against a City of Chicago ordinance that holds mortgage lenders responsible for the upkeep of vacant properties:

"I am deeply troubled that we have come to the point where the federal government is actually suing another unit of government in a territorial dispute over who gets to regulate vacant properties. Given the failures of Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and the Federal Housing Finance Agency to protect Americans from the abuses that led to the housing crisis, you would think they would be working overtime to turn things around in communities that are suffering. Instead, they are paying their lawyers with our tax bailout money to stop communities from doing anything to help.

"Vacant properties pose so many problems for society. They perpetuate blight, crime, environmental hazards and contribute to a general sense of hopelessness. They prevent us from putting the housing crisis behind us, and are bleeding municipalities of resources that could be used elsewhere, like foreclosure prevention.

"As Mayor Emanuel's office said, this clearly shows that we need state action. As the lead negotiator of an ongoing effort in the General Assembly to hold lenders accountable for properties where families have given up the keys and moved on, this has only reaffirmed my commitment to finding a solution that gets municipalities out of the property management business, and back in the business of governing."

For more information, please contact Yarbrough's constituent service office at (708) 615-1747.

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