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Joseph Topinka Sues Mother's Campaign Fund to Aid Foundation in Her Memory

Chicago, January 4 -- Joseph Baar Topinka, son of the late Illinois Comptroller, Judy Baar Topinka, and co-executor of her estate, has filed a four count lawsuit in the Chancery Division of the Cook County Circuit Court that alleges improprieties in his mother's campaign fund; seeks judicial oversight of the fund; and asks for transfers from the fund in accordance with Illinois law.

"It is more than a year since Mom's death and the start of the conversations between myself and the former staffers on the campaign committee. At no time over these twelve months have any of the conversations been satisfactory. I have been clear about my intention as her son and executor of her estate to promote the educational endeavors of Illinois youth and to use money in this fund to build a living memorial to my Mother and her career by helping young people become active in public affairs; in a manner reflecting the joyful exuberance of Mom's irrepressible spirit toward Illinois and its citizens. It is time to settle these matters so that work can proceed in building a better future through our youth," Topinka said.

Attorney Anthony Peraica, who as Cook County Commissioner nominated Ms. Topinka to the board of the Regional Transportation Authority, filed the suit on Topinka's behalf.

"Judy's legacy of working tirelessly with everyone for the public good is a bright example for all Illinoisans. Sadly, the folks at her campaign have been playing possum, hoping her family, friends, and supporters would forget the nearly one million campaign dollars that were accidentally left in their hands. As one who worked with and learned from Judy, I am appalled that they have behaved this way. We have said for months that they will perform in accordance with state law. Unfortunately, they chose to make this lawsuit, which will force them to do so, inevitable," Peraica said.

The Judy Baar Topinka Charitable Foundation was formed in July. It is a registered charitable trust and Illinois not-for-profit corporation. Its purpose is to assist young women and men with a demonstrated interest in public affairs with leadership, training and education.

"The foundation will memorialize Judy by propelling tomorrow's leaders for Illinois. But to get on with that work, the political staffers must follow the law. We took one year to convince them of that. Now the issue is in the court's hands," Topinka said.

A copy of the lawsuit is available at www.peraica.com

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