

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **AL HOFELD, JR. CALLS FOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO RESTORE CUTS TO VITAL HUMAN SERVICES**

*Hofeld Calls on Incumbent Raoul to Publicly Explain Votes to Increase His Own Salary and Refusal To Take Furlough Days In Face of Deep Cuts; Pledges to Never Vote For Salary Increase*

Today, Attorney Al Hofeld, Jr., candidate for the Illinois State Senate in the 13<sup>th</sup> Legislative District, called on legislative leaders in Springfield to restore funding to vital human services and community-based programs that were slashed as a result of the FY2010 stopgap budget. Among the cuts Mr. Hofeld identified were: \$180 million from early childhood education programs, \$3 million for the education of homeless children, and deep cuts to funding of non-profits with offices located in the 13<sup>th</sup> Legislative District, such as Ceasefire, YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago, Youth Guidance and other youth programs, which, combined, were forced to lay off 122 staff members.

“I cannot fathom how any elected official could vote for a budget that results in cuts that are so injurious to people,” Hofeld said. “Some human services are simply too vital to cut.” Noting the failure to restore these and other cuts in the fall veto session that ended in Springfield on Friday, Hofeld says he has continually advocated for the immediate restoration of these cuts and for passage of HB 174, which, he says, would “address the root causes of Illinois’ long-standing fiscal crisis.”

Based on policy analyses performed by the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, Hofeld argues that HB 174, if passed, would end Illinois’ continuing fiscal problems, provide for the sustained funding of vital services, and make needed investments to stimulate the economy and create jobs.

Mr. Hofeld also asked how incumbent State Senator Kwame Raoul, who voted to pass the stopgap budget that resulted in these specific funding cuts in the 13<sup>th</sup> District, could justify voting for increases to his own legislative salary and against taking unpaid furlough days.

“How could Sen. Raoul, in good conscience, continue to vote to increase his pay and refuse to take furlough days in the face of the worst budget cuts to human services Illinois has seen and in the middle of the worst job and home losses since the Great Depression?,” asked Mr. Hofeld.

Hofeld points to his opponent’s legislative record, which shows that, **in every year since he took office, the State has cut human services in the budget and, over the same period, Sen. Raoul has voted consistently to give himself a pay raise**, as

follows:

- May 31, 2009 – **Sen. Raoul is one of only five state senators** to vote against declining a pay raise and to against taking unpaid furlough days;
- August 12, 2008 – Sen. Raoul votes “present” on rejecting a pay raise (He was **one of only three “present” votes, with all other senators voting against the increase**);
- May 31, 2007 – Sen. Raoul votes to raise his pay by 9.6%; and
- April 25, 2006 – Sen. Raoul votes to raise his pay by 9.4%.

“Either the incumbent is out of touch and does not understand that many people in the 13<sup>th</sup> District are suffering **or his priority is himself**, not the people,” Hofeld said. “On May 31, 2009, fifty-four out of fifty-nine state senators did the right thing and voted to decline a pay increase, recognizing that so many of their constituents are losing jobs and homes, and doing their part to sacrifice something at a time when they were cutting the budget and laying off thousands of state workers,” said Mr. Hofeld, “**but not Sen. Raoul.**”

Hofeld pledged that, as the next state Senator from the 13<sup>th</sup> District, “I will never vote in favor of an increase to my legislative salary.” He noted that some of the worst unemployment and foreclosure rates in the city are associated with community areas that lie within the 13<sup>th</sup> Legislative District.

By contrast, over the course of a career that has spanned almost two decades, Mr. Hofeld has chosen to serve the public, at comparatively low pay, in every position he’s ever held. Hofeld, a graduate of Northwestern University School of Law, has worked for the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless. After law school, he worked at the Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago and organized the South Side Community Federal Credit Union to provide an alternative to financial predators. Currently, Hofeld has a poverty law practice dedicated exclusively to representing families who are victims of predatory home loans in cases of fraud and discrimination.

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