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Environmental Groups Issue Green Growth Platform for Next Chicago Mayor *Groups Raise 20 Questions for Mayoral Candidates' Responses for Voters*

Chicago, IL –Today, eighteen leading Chicago environmental and conservation groups issued their Green Growth Platform and questionnaire for the City. The groups are asking Mayoral candidates to answer 20 questions that will help voters learn where each candidate stands on the most important environmental issues facing our city. The environmental groups will then send the candidates' responses to their 100,000+ members and supporters and to the overall public.

Chicago has been a leading green city, and these environmental values are shared by many Chicagoans. The next Mayor should continue to lead and expand Chicago green positioning for the good of our city and its residents and to better compete in the global market.

At a press conference this morning, environmental leaders explained their Green Growth Platform, which focuses on developing clean energy and cleaning up old highly-polluting coal plants, improving recycling citywide, conserving water, protecting Lake Michigan and the Chicago River, promoting clean transportation and better mobility, creating more parks and open space and promoting local food. The complete survey is available at

The Green Growth Platform was created by a coalition of 16 environmental, conservation and civic organizations, including: Active Transportation Alliance, Alliance for the Great Lakes, Blacks in Green, Center for Neighborhood Technology, Chicago Recycling Coalition, Citizen Action/Illinois, Environmental Law & Policy Center, Environment Illinois, Friends of the Chicago River, Friends of the Forest Preserves, Friends of the Parks, Little Village Environmental Justice Organization, Metropolitan Planning Council, Nuclear Energy Information Services, Openlands, Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago and Sierra Club/Illinois Chapter. The groups will work to educate candidates on the issues and share the candidates' responses with the public.

“The next mayor should advance Chicago’s green leadership which attracts people and businesses to our great, livable city and spurs job creation and economic growth,” said Howard Learner, Executive Director of the Environmental Law & Policy Center. “Chicago voters care about environmental progress and will make choices based, in part, on candidates’ views on the Green Growth Platform. The ‘Green City’ that Mayor Daley helped to grow is a shared goal for most Chicagoans and an important fact of life for city politics,” said Learner.

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“A global city needs first-class transportation,” said MarySue Barrett, President of Metropolitan Planning Council. “Our next mayor can generate economic development, encourage healthy lifestyles, and reduce Chicago’s carbon footprint by improving the CTA, supporting high-speed rail and electric vehicles, and making the city more bicycle and pedestrian friendly.”

“Chicagoans are tired of trashing their natural resources,” said Mike Nowak, President of the Chicago Recycling Coalition. “We need the next mayor to move common sense programs forward, so that all citizens have access to convenient and efficient recycling services.”

“We need leaders who will work for clean water,” said Margaret Frisbie, Executive Director of the Friends of the Chicago River. “In the past few decades we’ve changed the Chicago River from a toxic dumping ground into a haven for wildlife and recreation, but we’re still one of the only major cities in the nation that doesn’t disinfect the sewage effluent pumped into our waterways. It’s time to change that.”

“Chicagoans are proud of our neighborhood and lakefront parks,” said Gerald Adelman, President and CEO of Openlands. “But the City has much less recreational green space than other cities. Investing in neighborhood parks increases property values, improves the health and fitness of people of all ages, and creates a valuable educational resource too.”

“Improving the energy use in the city’s building stock is a political and economic winner,” said Kathryn Tholin, CEO of the Center for Neighborhood Technology. “It saves residents and building owners real money, creates jobs, preserves affordable housing, and improves air quality. Dramatically increasing energy efficiency—along with ramping up renewable energy use—are goals the next mayor needs to wholeheartedly pursue.”

"Mayor Daley leaves very big green shoes for the next Mayor to fill," said Jack Darin, Director of the Sierra Club, Illinois Chapter. "If Chicago is to be the greenest city in America, the next mayor will need to bring his or her own passion and commitment to tackling these big issues for our future."

“There is a clear link between clean air and the health of Chicago residents,” said Joel J. Africk, President and Chief Executive Officer of Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago. “We will all look to our next Mayor to help us clean up our dirty coal power plants and the older diesel buses and trucks that are polluting the air we all breathe.”

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