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Preckwinkle, Tobolski help Medical Examiner's Office regain national accreditation

"We are honored that the Cook County Medical Examiner has once again regained its national accreditation and is well on its way to being recognized as one of the best in the nation in terms of key areas such as operations, staffing, and procedures." - 16th District Cook County Board Commissioner Jeff Tobolski

McCook, IL –Cook County Board Commissioner Jeff Tobolski (D-McCook) and Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle (D-Chicago) announced that the Cook County Medical Examiner's Office has been fully accredited by the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME). The Cook County Medical Examiner's office is the only medical examiner's office in Illinois to have full accreditation by NAME.

Accreditation is conferred for a maximum period of five (5) years from the date of the Accreditation Certificate, with annual inspections to maintain this designation. In order to receive full accreditation, NAME requires that a medical examiner office meet or exceed national standards in key areas of operations, staffing, and procedures.

President Preckwinkle praised the arduous work of Dr. Stephen Cina, the Chief Cook County Medical Examiner, his staff, and the members of the Medical Examiner's Advisory Committee for achieving this milestone.

Commissioner Tobolski, who was appointed by President Preckwinkle to represent the Cook County Board on the Medical Examiner's Advisory Committee, discussed the new policies and procedures instituted after copious meetings of the Committee.

"This was not an easy task but by no means insurmountable," said Commissioner Tobolski. "This notable accomplishment was made possible due to the cooperation among the medical examiner's office and members of the committee, as well as the full support of the President's office."

As you may recall, the medical examiner's office required significant reform in the wake of a scandal over the treatment of amassing corpses and chaos that plagued the office. To help remedy those issues, Commissioner Tobolski passed a reform ordinance in 2012 that placed stricter notification procedures for the medical examiner's office, making the Medical Examiner report to the County Board quarterly, and placing a 60 day maximum time limit on how long bodies can remain at the County Medical Examiner's Office.

"More importantly, we will continue to work hard to ensure that Cook County remains on the forefront of forensic pathology to treat our deceased with the respect and dignity they deserve," said Commissioner Tobolski.

Cook County District 16 includes the villages of Berwyn, Cicero, Schiller Park, Franklin Park, Forest View, McCook, Hodgkins, Lyons, Summit, Willow Springs, Countryside, Western Springs, LaGrange,

LaGrange Park, Northlake, Forest Park, Westchester, Stone Park, Berkeley, Broadview, Hillside, Melrose Park, Brookfield, Riverside, North Riverside, and Stickney.