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FROM: Chambers of the Chief Judge
19th Judicial Circuit
Lake County
Waukegan, Illinois 60085-4359

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Waukegan, Illinois

CIRCUIT JUDGE JAY W. UKENA RETIRES

Circuit Judge Jay W. Ukena retired, effective today, January 30, 2020, after over 11 years on the bench. "I am humbled, honored, and proud to have served the people of Lake County for over 40 years. I worked hard to be a good attorney and a good judge," said Judge Ukena.

The Honorable Jay W. Ukena was first elected Circuit Judge of the First Subcircuit in the November 2008 general election. He began his career in the Family Division in February 2009 and served as the Presiding Judge of the Family Division from January 2011 – June 2014. From there, he transferred to the Felony/Misdemeanor/Traffic Division where he presided over felony traffic matters. Judge Ukena most recently served two years as Chief Judge of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit, from January 2, 2018 – January 1, 2020.

Prior to his judicial election, Judge Ukena was in private practice for twenty-nine years, which consisted of the areas of family law, criminal, traffic, and Social Security disability. He also served as general counsel for the North Shore Sanitary District, the Attorney for Waukegan Township, Chief Prosecutor for the City of Waukegan, and Chief Prosecutor for the Village of Lake Zurich.

Judge Ukena graduated from Lake Forest College with a Bachelor of Arts and earned his Juris Doctor from John Marshall Law School. In January of 2011, Judge Ukena was appointed to the Child Support Advisory Committee by the State of Illinois, where he served a three-year term. He is a member of Illinois Judges Association, the Illinois State Bar Association, and the Lake County Bar Association.

"Judge Ukena's service has assisted and guided our Circuit and the people of Lake County. His knowledge of the law, and experiences in both prosecution and defense made him a well-respected judge to the people of Lake County, attorneys, and his peers on the bench. He will be missed, but we wish him the best in his retirement," said Chief Judge Diane E. Winter.

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