The 2006 Illinois General Election
A Vote Analysis

I. Statewide Turnout by Region

II. Illinois Governor

III. Cook County Board President

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January – 2007

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This report is a non-partisan analysis of the 2006 Illinois General Election. It is produced by the Institute for Politics at Roosevelt University – in cooperation with the Illinois State Board of Elections and is funded in part with a grant from AT&T Illinois – its author is Institute Director, Paul Green. Comments on this material are welcomed –
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I 2006 General Election: Illinois Turnout

There is an old Chicago political adage, "If you don't vote – you don't count." In the 2006 mid-term elections less than 50% of registered Illinois voters went to the polls – thus in effect giving those individuals who did vote over twice as much power to pick the state's leaders.

Overall the total 2006 turnout was 65,516 votes less than in 2002 (See Table I). Also continuing an ongoing demographic shift – only the five collar counties (DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will) voting region saw an increase in voter turnout while the other three regions experienced a vote decrease.

Percentage-wise the five collars constituted nearly one-fourth of the Illinois vote – this collar county statewide vote percentage gain came mainly at the expense of Chicago. The state's biggest city voted less than 19% of the statewide vote which a generation ago would have meant big trouble for Illinois Democrats. Not any more! Why? Two reasons – first – as will be seen later in this report – a solid Democratic vote strength has consolidated itself in suburban Cook county townships and has in fact spilled over into the collars (especially Lake and Will counties). Second – though Chicago casts less votes than in the past, Democratic margins and percentages have reached Mt. Everest heights in the city as Chicago Republicans continue to shrink away as a political force.

I-A/Turnout by Region - Chicago 50 Wards

Ward vote power in Chicago is uneven. Only four wards cast over 20,000 votes (#19 - #42 - #41 and #21). Two of these wards (#19 and #21) are far southside wards – the 19th being predominately white while the 21st is largely black. The other two top wards are geographically separated with the 41st located on the city's far northwest side while the 42nd is a near north lakefront ward – both of these wards are also predominately white.

Given the geographical and racial diversity of these four "top gun" wards one could assume this vote power has been decentralized through the city. Not true! Looking further down the big turnout wards one finds five of the top ten turnout wards are far southside, middle class African-American wards (#21 - #8 - #34 - #6 and #18) while three of these ten are lakefront or near lakefront wards (#42 - #43 - #47). Thus only #19 (southside Beverly neighborhood) and #41 (far northwest side) do not fit this shifting vote power structure in the city.

Old time big turnout monster wards – especially on the far and near southwest sides – have lost their vote muscle. For example – the legendary 11th ward (Bridgeport) – home of the Daleys – had the twenty-eighth highest turnout – while Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan's once mighty 13th ward came in twenty-third. Even the far southwest side, 23rd ward (bailiwick of current Congressman Dan Lipinski and past Congressman Bill Lipinski) which in previous elections challenged for the best city turnout ward – had totals that put it only in eleventh place.

Obviously there could be several reasons for this remarkable vote power shift – but one certain variable is the growing number of Hispanics moving into these wards. Analyzing Hispanic turnout patterns is beyond the scope of this report – however – whatever the reasons Hispanics do not vote anywhere near their population numbers in Chicago. In fact, examining the eleven lowest turnout wards (under 10,000 turnout) only two – the near southside black 15th and 16th wards – were not predominately Hispanic. Furthermore, even the presence of non-Hispanic powerful ward leadership e.g., #14 Ald. Ed Burke and #33 Ald. Dick Mell did not make a difference in turning out Hispanic voters.

I-B/Turnout by Region – Suburban Cook County – 30 Townships

Like in Chicago the big turnout townships were scattered. Running one/two were Wheeling township (44,958 votes) located in northwest Cook county and Thornton township (44,671) situated in the near south suburbs. Also above the 40,000+ figure were southwest Worth township (42,693) and Proviso (41,857) in the western part of the county. Not only were these townships geographically separated, but they were dissimilar in their racial, socio-economic and political characteristics. Thornton and Proviso – are heavily African-American – with large pockets of low income residents, while Wheeling is overwhelmingly white and mainly middle class and Worth – is largely white, economically diverse with a growing mix of Asian and middle east populations.

As Table I shows – suburban Cook county out voted its fellow county residents in Chicago (by over 10,000 votes). Neither the city nor its Cook suburbs expects a huge population increase, thus it is likely that this trend of suburban Cook matching or beating Chicago's turnout should continue for the foreseeable future. It is indeed ironic - that the demographic equalizing of the city and suburban vote should come about as a majority of these suburban voters become reliably Democratic. Obviously the racially changing south suburban townships like Thornton, Bloom, Bremen and Rich – that were not so long ago GOP bastions – have flipped politically (especially Thornton and Rich) and now produce vote turnouts like Chicago – southside middle-class African-American wards – with powerful Democratic majorities. However, even in non-African-American townships with huge turnouts – Democratic candidates are making significant inroads in state and county contests.

I-C/Turnout by Region – The Collars – 5 Counties

The collars continue to grow and produce more voters. As previously stated they were the state's only vote region to increase its vote totals and percentage of the Illinois vote compared to 2002.

As in the past, DuPage county led the collar county vote parade (268,988 vote turnout/nearly one-third of the collar total). Lake county cast nearly one-fourth of the vote while fast growing Will county voted nearly 20% of the collar total. Interestingly Kane and McHenry counties combined voted less than one-fourth of the vote. In sum the collar totals are heavily influenced by DuPage county with Lake and Will becoming major players in the collars and the state at large.

I-D/Turnout by Region – Downstate – 96 Counties

In total votes the ninety-six downstate counties were by far the biggest turnout region. As Table I reveals – downstate out-voted Cook county by over 60,000 votes. However, in examining downstate turnout, two critical factors must be explained.

First, unlike Cook county and especially Chicago – the vast expanse of the downstate 96 counties (the rest of the state's counties other than Cook and the collars) are in total far more politically competitive than suburban Cook county and certainly Chicago. This political reality reduces the statewide clout that such a large chunk of the vote could possibly produce for downstate voters.

Second, nearly 40% of the downstate 96 vote comes from just nine counties (Madison, Winnebago, Sangamon, St. Clair, Peoria, Champaign, Rock Island, McLean and Tazewell) leaving most of the other eighty seven counties politically isolated in statewide races. The so-

called “Big Nine” reflect the competiveness of the downstate 96 with the Democrats producing big margins in several of these counties, e.g., Madison and St. Clair while the GOP doing the same in Sangamon and McLean.

Madison (Collinsville) in southwestern Illinois and Winnebago (Rockford) in the northwest part of the state had 80,000+ turnouts while Sangamon (Springfield) and St. Clair (East St. Louis) were in the 70,000+ range. All of the other “Big Nine” had over 44,000 vote turnouts. At the other end of the turnout scale many small counties had turnouts of fewer than 5,000 votes. Clearly residents in these counties have little chance to see in person a statewide candidate – and must rely on the media and the internet to learn about their choices.

II 2006 General Election: Illinois Governor

The Candidates	Party
Rod Blagojevich	Democrat
Judy Baar Topinka	Republican
Rich Whitney	Green

On November 7, 2006 incumbent Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich was re-elected easily over his two opponents Judy Baar Topinka and Rich Whitney. Though this victory was similar in some ways to his 2002 election triumph – Blagojevich broke new ground for a statewide Democratic candidate by his vote performance in the once rock solid GOP collar counties.*

* The five suburban counties that surround Cook County (Chicago). The five are DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will.

To be sure, the strong third party candidacy of Rich Whitney [Green] was a factor in the collars as it was in other state voting regions – nevertheless, in 2002 Blagojevich lost the collars in a two-way race by over 147,000 votes – in 2006 in a three-way race he lost the collars by 32,484 votes. This single statistic doomed Topinka's candidacy.

As for the campaign itself, little effort was made to have a substantive debate on the issues. Like former Chicago Mayor Jane Byrne suggested over a quarter of a century ago "television has become the new precinct captain". Blagojevich's huge dollar war chest advantage gave him uncontested control of the airwaves for most of the campaign – and it was here that the battle was brought to the public. And though throughout the campaign year the U.S. Attorney for Illinois Northern District – Patrick Fitzgerald and his assistants – were busy indicting and convicting past and present state and local elected and appointed officials on various degrees of corruption – this process had little impact on the gubernatorial campaign.

The geo-political terrain of Illinois is shifting to a darker shade of Democratic <u>BLUE</u>. Why?

Chicago remains a Democratic stronghold – Cook County suburbs for various reasons have become a Democratic vote adjunct to its big city –

The collars are growing more politically competitive –

Downstate – especially central Illinois remains a Republican vote producer – but by itself it can not overcome Democratic strength in the rest of the state.

<u>II-A/Governor's Race – Chicago</u>

Once again Chicago's African-American community gave overwhelming support to Blagojevich. Table II shows that the Governor carried all of the city's fifty wards while piling

up a 404,725 vote margin over Topinka. However, the real story of Blagojevich's big Chicago numbers rests in the black community.

The numbers are astounding. Fourteen African-American wards gave the Governor 10,000+ victory margins. As expected keying this onslaught were the far southside, middle-class black wards. For example, wards #21 and #8 gave Blagojevich 18,000+ vote margins while two others, #34 and #6 supported the Governor with 16000+ margins.

Percentage-wise, Blagojevich's African-American support is even more impressive. Sixteen wards (fifteen black/one Hispanic) gave the Governor 90%+ of their vote. Again, the far southside led the way, e.g. #17 tallied over 97% of its vote for Blagojevich. Seven more wards came in at 80%+ while most of the remaining wards were in the 70%+ range.

At the bottom end of the Governor's ward percentage parade were his -six- lowest winning wards where he totaled less than 60% of the vote. These wards in rank order (highest to lowest) were #32 - #45 - #19 - #43 - #42 – and #41. Three of these wards are along or near the north lakefront #42 and #43 lakefront - #32 a quickly gentrifying ward bordering the other two wards while two #41 and #45 are far northwest side wards while #19 sits on the far southwest side. None of these six wards have sizable numbers of African-American residents and they all can be regarded as middle to upper-middle income wards. If the GOP is going to make any move to regain party strength in Chicago – these six wards will be a centerpiece of the renewal.

Like her Republican friend Jim Ryan (the 2002 GOP gubernatorial candidate) Topinka got clobbered in Chicago. Unlike Ryan who carried one ward in 2002 (#41) Topinka was shut-out in the city (Whitney's candidacy probably cost her the 41st ward). Most troublesome for

Topinka and the Illinois GOP was that outside of #41 (lost by 650 votes) she was beaten by at least 3000+ votes in every other remaining city ward.

As to be expected, Topinka's ward percentages were just as gloomy as her margin losses. Only the 41st ward gave her over 40% of its vote while four other wards #42 - #43 - #19 - #45 provided her with 30% + of their vote. At the other end of the percentage rankings twenty wards (eighteen black and two Hispanic) gave her less than 10% of their vote.

Rich Whitney, a southern Illinois resident ran a low-key campaign under the Green party banner. His main issue was that he was an alternative to the two major party candidates. Only some late campaign flaps about his past associates and his views on guns kept his vote totals from becoming even more impressive.

Chicago was Whitney's weakest part of the state, as he won no wards, while receiving 47696 votes (8.3%). Six wards (mainly north lakefront and near lakefront) gave him over 2000+ votes while percentage wise #47 (near lakefront ward) was his best ward (17.8%). Not surprisingly Whitney barely made a vote dent in African-American, Hispanic and the remaining ethnic wards (under 10% in thirty-six of these wards) as their loyalty to the Democratic party stayed firm and unbendable.

II-B/Governor's Race – Suburban 30

In 2002 Blagojevich defeated Jim Ryan in the Suburban 30 (the thirty Cook County townships not in Chicago) by almost 51,000 votes while carrying thirteen townships. Four years later the Governor improved his vote performance in this region as he bested Topinka by almost 104,000 votes while winning eighteen townships. Interestingly, Blagojevich's 2006 overall Sub 30 vote percentage remained almost the same compared to 2002 – it was Topinka's percentage compared to Ryan where the big change took place. Topinka received around 8% LESS of the

Sub 30 vote when compared to Ryan and it appears most of the GOP drop-off went to Whitney. The bottom line in the Sub 30 was simple – Blagojevich more than doubled his margin of victory over his Republican opponent.

As in the city – suburban Cook townships with a large black vote went overwhelmingly for the Governor. Thornton township, the south suburban colossus, gave Blagojevich a 28000 winning margin. Three other townships Proviso (west) and Rich and Bremen (south) provided Blagojevich 10,000+ margins. Interestingly, his next six best margin townships (all 4000+ votes) were scattered throughout the county. Evanston and Niles (north), Oak Park and Cicero (west) Bloom and Worth (south). These latter six townships either had significant black populations, were considered liberal, or as in the case of Worth and Cicero had pro-Blagojevich and anti-Topinka political factors working for the Governor.

Percentage-wise Blagojevich received his highest mark from Calumet (86.6%) a tiny south suburban township with a heavy African-American vote base. Mighty Thornton was also 80%+ for the Governor while seven other townships came in at 60% plus. In the eighteen townships won by Blagojevich, only north suburban Schaumburg and Maine did not give the victorious Governor at least 50% + of their vote.

The magnitude of Topinka's defeat in the Sub 30 can be seen in one simple vote comparison. The total of Topinka's margins over Blagojevich in her twelve winning townships – was a little over 18000 votes. The Governor's margin in Thornton township alone was nearly 10,000 votes greater than the sum of Topinka's twelve township winning margins.

The Topinka "township dozen" wins were also scattered. Her best margin was in northwest Palatine township (3667) and she recorded 1000+ margin victories in western, southwestern and other northern townships. Percentage-wise her home Riverside township gave

her 62%+ of their vote while Barrington (61.4%) was the only other 60%+ township. In only three other winning townships did Topinka top 50% (Lemont – Palatine – River Forest) thus greatly limiting her ability to rack up significant margin wins over Blagojevich.

Whitney's Sub 30 strength was in liberal and affluent parts of the county. Three townships (Wheeling – Evanston – Worth) gave the Green party candidate over 4000 votes. Percentage-wise Oak Park and Evanston townships provided Whitney 18%+ totals while several northwestern townships came in at 10%+.

II-C/Governors Race – The -5- Collar Counties

Despite the significant Blagojevich surge in the Suburban 30 – it is the 5 collars where the true 2006 GOP political disaster smothered Topinka and the rest of the statewide ticket. Compared to 2002 – Blagojevich upped his collar vote percentage by over 3% and has been mentioned earlier cut his Republican foe's collar winning margin by over 110,000 votes. Conversely, Topinka's collar vote percentage dipped by almost 12% compared to Ryan's 2002 totals. To be sure, Whitney's 3rd party candidacy was a far greater factor in 2006 than 3rd party Libertarian candidate Cal Skinner was in 2002 (Whitney won 12% of the collar vote while Skinner won 3%). Nevertheless, the basic fact that an Illinois GOP gubernatorial candidate received less than 50% of the vote in the once bedrock Republican collars is a staggering statistic that should elate Democrats and frighten Republicans.

In 2002 Blagojevich lost all five collars – in 2006 he won two, Will and Lake. Margin-wise, both counties gave him 6000+ wins over Topinka and they also presented him with similar winning percentages (Will 46.8% - Lake 46.2%). Though he lost the other three collars he did put up respectable numbers in each of them (McHenry was his worst county at 37.8%). A few

decades ago Democratic gubernatorial candidates could not even dream of reaching Blagojevich's collar vote and percentage totals.

DuPage county came through for Topinka – even though its GOP numbers paled compared to the recent "good old days". DuPage gave Topinka her only 50%+ percentage in the collar counties (50.9%) while providing her with a 31079 victory margin over the Governor. In McHenry and Kane her victory margins were much more meager (McHenry 8796 and Kane 5861). Again Whitney's candidacy made a difference but the fact remains – Blagojevich's margin wins in Will and Lake were each bigger than Topinka's triumph in Kane.

Whitney garnered over 10% of the vote in each of the five collars with best percentage showings being McHenry (13.4%) and Kane (13.0%). Vote-wise he pulled over 20,000 votes in DuPage (26330) and Lake (20617). Whether Whitney's candidacy created or even exacerbated GOP problems in the collars will not be known for sure until the 2008 U.S. Senate and Presidential contests. However, for the time being Republican collar county vote drop-off looms large in determining whether Illinois will once again become a politically competitive state.

II-D/Governors Race – The Downstate 96

The one relative bright spot for Topinka and Illinois Republicans was central Illinois – especially the counties along the Interstate 72 corridor and particularly Sangamon county (Springfield). Normally a Governor running for re-election does well in the state capitol. He benefits from a high number of state employees, constant name recognition and his party's energized local politicians all combining to provide a solid vote total for the incumbent. Not in 2006.

Blagojevich was routed in Sangamon county as Topinka garnered 68% of the vote that produced a 34,707 margin for the challenger. Why? Could it be – 1) the Chicago-based Governor's unwillingness to live in the Springfield state mansion; 2) the ongoing federal investigation into hiring practices and fundraising efforts of his administration; 3) a quarter century of Republican gubernatorial domination in Springfield or, 4) some – or all – of the above or perhaps other non-mentioned reasons. Whatever the causes – the fact remains – in 2002 Blagojevich lost Sangamon county by 9435 votes – in 2006 his losing margin in the county nearly "quadrupled".

Overall, Blagojevich's losing margin in the Downstate 96 counties increased from 69,556 votes in 2002 to 108584 votes in 2006 – with most of his drop-off coming along the central state I-72 corridor. Lastly, this political face-drop took place while Green party candidate Whitney was receiving 12% of the Downstate 96 vote. A lingering future political issue for debate will be – without Whitney in the race would Blagojevich's 2006 downstate performance been even worse.

As Table II reveals, the Governor won twenty-nine Downstate 96 counties. A majority of these counties were located in far southern Illinois (on or below Interstate 64). As in the past, the two southwestern Democratic powerhouse counties, Madison and St. Clair, gave him his highest downstate margins – (Madison – 12612/St. Clair – 11232 votes). The Governor also did well in the large northern counties of Rock Island and Winnebago. In sum, nine counties gave him 1000+ vote margins and of these, six were from the southern part of the state.

Percentage-wise Blagojevich had two 60%+ counties Alexander (67.5%) and Gallatin (62.3%). Fourteen other counties were in the 50%+ range and has been said previously, a preponderance of these counties were in southern Illinois. On the negative side, the Governor

barely topped 20% of the vote in Sangamon county and was under 30% in eighteen other downstate counties – most of these being in the central part of the state.

Topinka had two other central Illinois counties besides Sangamon give her 10000+ vote margin wins – Champaign (12737) and McLean (Bloomington-Normal 10,576). Right behind the top three was Vermillion (Danville) that gave her a 9656 vote margin win over Blagojevich. In all fifteen counties gave her 3000+ margin wins while twenty-seven others were 1000+ Topinka margin counties. Most of these top Topinka counties were in Central Illinois, but unfortunately for Topinka – most of them were small.

Four counties (Vermillion – Edwards – Menard – Wayne) gave Topinka 70% of their vote. Fifteen more gave her 60%+ while thirty more gave her 50%+ of their votes. Overall, in forty-nine counties (more than half of the Downstate 96 vote region) Topinka received a majority of the vote – she won five more counties than Jim Ryan did in 2002 – and upped her overall margin victory – yet in the end her downstate 96 performance was not nearly enough to compete with Blagojevich.

It is safe to say that at the moment, Illinois Republicans are being "squeezed" geo-politically from the northern and southern parts of the state. Their remaining central state strength does not have the vote power to challenge the "squeeze" – thereby allowing Illinois to once again become a politically competitive state. In sum, the GOP must break out of this pressing political vise and find new voters outside of its base.

Whitney ran relatively strong in all parts of the state. In fifty-one of the Downstate 96 counties he received at least 10%+ of the vote. His best showing by far was Winnebago (Rockford – 18381 votes) while he garnered 5000+ votes in five other counties (Champaign – 8855/Peoria – 8216/Sangamon – 8064/Tazewell – 6330/McLean – 6276). In eight other counties

he captured at least 3000+ votes giving the Green party at least for the near term – hope to compete in future battles.

His home turf of Jackson county (Carbondale) was his best percentage county (25.2%). However, Whitney ran extremely well in the far northern counties of Winnebago (24.1%) and its neighbor Boone (22.5%). He also won over 20% of the vote in another northern county, Ogle (22.0%). Why Whitney ran so strong far from his southern home base is another puzzle that will have to be solved by both major parties as they prepare for 2008.

III 2006 General Election: Cook County Board President

The Candidates

Todd Stroger – Democrat

Tony Peraica – Republican

The race for Cook County Board President (CCBP) was as much a soap opera as it was a political contest. The behind the scenes high drama and Machiavellian maneuvering surrounding this battle are beyond the scope and purpose of this report. However, for clarity and timeline understanding – here are the basic facts:

1. John Stroger [D] elected CCBP in 1994 was running for renomination in 2006 against a spirited primary challenge from fellow board member and Democrat Forrest Claypool;
2. On March 14th (one week prior to primary election day) Stroger suffered a severe stroke that forced him to disappear from the campaign trail;
3. On March 21st Stroger defeated Claypool by 41952 votes in a close contest as African-American voters and Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley allies rallied to Stroger's banner;

4. Stroger spokesmen led by his son Todd (8th ward alderman) and William Beavers (7th ward alderman) suggested in the post primary period that John Stroger was improving from his stroke and was still a viable November candidate;
5. In July it was announced that John Stroger was dropping out of the race due to the stroke and that he and his key supporters were now backing his son Todd to take his place;
6. In mid-July – the Cook County Democratic Central Committee, per the election code's legal requirements, nominated Todd Stroger to replace his dad on the November ballot;
7. Republican Tony Peraica, also a sitting county board member, attacked vigorously the entire replacement process and advocated real reform to end cronyism;
8. And last, the media also denounced how Todd Stroger was selected and joined Peraica calling for reform in the hiring and budgetary process.

III-A/Cook County Board President's Race – Chicago

Table III reveals that Stroger received over two-thirds of the Chicago vote against Peraica. And like his dad in the spring primary Todd Stroger's vote percentage and victory margins in Chicago were better than his opponents similar winning performances in the Suburban 30 townships – thereby producing another Stroger triumph.

As expected, Stroger ran strong in his home turf – far southside middle-class – African-American Chicago wards. In eleven wards, he gained 10,000+ margins led by #21 (17784 votes) and his own 8th ward (17,138). Only two of these top eleven wards were not on the south side – these being #24 and #29 on the city's west side (both heavily African-American).

Stroger also ran well on the near southwest side winning wards closely associated with his father's long-time friend – Mayor Richard M. Daley.

Percentage-wise the ward story for Stroger was the same. Fifteen wards gave him over 90% of their vote. All of them heavily African-American – and were located on the south and west sides. As mentioned above, Stroger also ran well in several old-ethnic southwest side wards, e.g., #14 (Ald. Ed Burke – 68.2%), #13 (Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan – 66.6%) and #11 (County Board member John Daley – 58.6%). Like his dad in the primary, Stroger needed both overwhelming black support and significant white and Hispanic Daley support in Chicago to pull off a victory.

Peraica's strength was largely on the far northwest and southwest sides and the lakefront. He benefited not only from the controversy surrounding his opponent's candidacy selection process but also his intriguing immigrant background (a first generation American – who worked his way up the economic ladder). He was also well versed in county board business and proved to be an indefatigable campaigner.

Peraica's best margin winning wards were #41 (northwest side – 9739 votes), #45 (northwest side – 4140 votes) and #42 (north lakefront – 3781 votes). Four other wards gave him 1000+ margins (#43 - #38 - #23 and #36) as the GOP candidate garnered 31.5% of the city vote. Even though amassing nearly a third of the Chicago vote as a Republican was admirable – his city numbers needed to be better given the political shifts taking place in suburban Cook county.

As Table III shows, Peraica received 60.7% of the Suburban 30 township vote. He ran strong-to-very strong in several northwest and southwest townships. Margin-wise northwest suburban Wheeling was by far his best township – as he beat Stroger there by 20182 votes. Peraica had eight other townships where he won by over 10000+ margins (Orland –

15436/Palatine – 15417/Maine – 14951/Worth – 14389/Northfield – 13454/Lyons – 12906/Schaumburg – 10683/and Elk Grove – 10143).

Of his twenty-three winning townships, Peraica had fourteen give him at least 70% of their vote. Barrington township led the way (81.4%) with Lemont and Riverside close behind. Peraica's Suburban 30 performance was impressive – but it was not enough to overcome Stroger's Chicago margins. Why? Unlike in the past when Republican candidates ran well in suburban Cook, they had little fear that their Democratic foe could counter their winning township vote with big numbers from their own winning townships – if they had any at all. Not anymore!

Stroger won only seven townships – but one of them, Thornton, gave him a whopping 20471 vote margin over Peraica. Two other townships Rich (8297 votes) and Proviso (5970 votes) also gave the Democratic candidate big margin victories. The other four Stroger township triumphs (Calumet – Bloom – Evanston – Bremen) shared a single demographic characteristic with his top three townships – all of them had significant African-American populations. There is little doubt that ongoing movement of blacks to suburban Cook county (especially – the south suburbs) is impacting heavily on GOP efforts to produce massive margin wins for their candidates – even in a contest as unique as the 2006 Cook County Board President race.

Stroger's percentage victories ranged from Calumet 80.5% to Bremen 51.0%. Overall Stroger received over 25% of the vote in twenty-four of the thirty townships. And though these latter percentages are hardly over powering, they were critical because they kept Peraica from matching the Democrat's winning percentage in Chicago.

Conclusion

This report demonstrates the Illinois Republican party is in trouble. Statewide it could not seriously contest any of the constitutional officer races. It remains the minority party in both chambers of the Illinois General Assembly. And though its candidate for Cook County Board President ran a strong race – garnering over 46% of the county vote – he still lost. Moreover, it is doubtful that in future county contests there will ever be a series of political circumstances more favorable to a Republican candidate as there were in the 2006 CCBP battle. Lastly, all other GOP Cook county-wide candidates lost by numbers so huge that any analysis of their vote would be useless.

As for the Democrats – the good news is they control every level of power in the state of Illinois. The bad news is – they control every level of power in the state of Illinois. Politics is about competition, ambition and power – and when the opposing political party is weak – one often sees members of the dominant party begin fighting each other. Illinois Democrats would be wise to remember that twelve short years ago – Illinois Republicans were nearly in the same position the Democrats found themselves today.

As for Cook county – there is little Republicans can do except to hope that somehow internal and external political and legal forces creates a political earthquake that shakes up the current Democratic stranglehold on power and gives the GOP a chance to compete.

TABLE 1

2006 General Election: Illinois Voter Turnout by Region – Compared to 2002

Region	Chicago	Suburban Cook	Cook County	* Collars	Downstate	Statewide
	50 Wards	30 Townships	Combined Total	5 Counties	96 Counties	102 Counties
Total Statewide 2002	725531	697872	1423403	786878	1441527	3651808
% of Total State 2002 vote	19.9%	19.1%	39.0%	21.5%	39.5%	100%
Total State vote 2006	670222	680693	1350915	821425	1413952	3586292
% of Total State 2006 vote	18.7%	19.0%	37.7%	22.9%	39.4%	100%
Vote – Gain or (Loss) – 2006 – compared to 2002	(55309)	(17179)	(72488)	34547	(27575)	(65516)
% of State Total -- Gain or (Loss) – 2006 – Compared to 2002	(1.2%)	(.1%)	(1.3%)	1.4%	(.1%)	
*DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, Will						

TABLE II

2006 General Election: Illinois Governor

Region	Rod Blagojevich [D]	Judy Baar Topinka [R]	Rich Whitney*[G]
Chicago			
Votes	504457	99732	47696
Margin	404725		
%	77.4%	15.3%	8.3%
Wards Won	-50-	-0-	-0-
Sub 30			
Votes	349676	245796	61425
Margin	103880		
%	53.2%	37.4%	9.4%
Townships Won	-18-	-12-	-0-
****Collar Counties**			
Votes	337048	369532	89180
Margin		32484	
%	42.4%	46.4%	11.2%
Counties Won	-2-	-3-	-0-
Downstate 96			
Votes	545038	653622	162862
Margin		108584	
%	40%	48%	12%
Counties Won	-29-	67	-0-
Statewide Total			
Votes	1736219	1368682	361163
Margin	367537		
*** %	50.1%	39.5%	10.4%
****	49.8%	39.3%	10.4&
Counties Won	-32-	-70-	-0-

***** [G] Green Party ** DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will

*** Percentages based on only top -3- candidates

**** Percentages based on all gubernatorial candidates

TABLE III

2006 General Election: Cook County Board President

Region	Todd Stroger [D]	Tony Peraica [R]
CHICAGO		
Votes	434105	199217
Margin	234888	
%	68.5%	31.5%
Wards Won	-38-	-12-
SUB 30		
Votes	256839	396993
Margin		140154
%	39.3%	60.7%
Townships Won	-7-	-23-
COUNTY TOTAL		
Votes	690944	596210
Margin	94734	
%	53.7%	46.3%