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**Business Owner Andrea Raila Announces  
Candidacy for Cook County Assessor in the Democratic Primary**

***Raila unveils platform to achieve equitable property assessments for businesses, homeowners and tenants, and to enable policies for a taxpayer friendly and responsive tax appeal system.***

**Chicago, IL, October 14, 2009** – Andrea Raila, a business owner, tax consultant and reform advocate of 25 years, announced her candidacy for the office of Cook County Assessor on Wednesday.

The Cook County Assessor oversees the valuation and taxation of more than 1.8 million parcels of real estate, using a unique assessment and appeals system that is one of the biggest and most complex in the nation. County owners provide more than \$10 billion dollars in tax revenues annually, about 42 % of the total real estate tax revenues of Illinois.

“Cook County property taxpayers deserve the most modern, professional, transparent and understandable assessment process possible,” Raila said. “ For decades Cook County property valuations have been so far off state constitutional requirements, that the state has to apply a multiplier of over 2.9”. In the detailed formula on property tax bills 2<sup>nd</sup> installments out this November the multiplier increases assessments by 190%.

If elected as Assessor, Raila stated that she would streamline the entire system of assessment and appeals. “Jim Houlihan, as outgoing Assessor, has made positive steps at modernization and transparency,” Raila said. “I want to continue to advance those improvements so taxpayers better understand how market values are derived and how their tax appeal decisions are made.”

In her platform for change Raila proposes to:

- Cap reassessment increases to no more than 5% for **all** property types.
- Advocate implementing the same assessment levels and practices used in all other Illinois counties.
- Upgrade computerized assessment records and notices, disclosing latest sales.
- Allow for tax appeal challenges of the state multiplier.
- Place limits on campaign contributions by tax appeal lawyers and consultants to the Assessor.
- Lobby to make the Assessor position an appointed one, like the Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board, the highest level of administrative property tax appeal which oversees both the Cook County Assessor and Board of Review actions

“There is nothing more important during these difficult economic times than to make sure that assessments reflect the real depreciation of values in the real estate market,” Raila said. “Homeowners, tenants, business people and investors are struggling. We must work now to make our tax system fair. These changes would curb the State’s significant assessment and valuation powers over Cook County property owners.”

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