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June 19, 2006

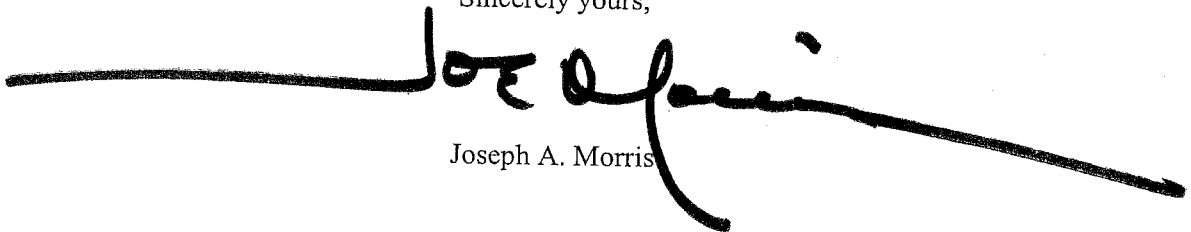
Dear Steve and Denis:

It was on June 19, 1865, when Major General Gordon Granger led Union troops into Galveston, Texas, and brought the news to the slaves in that far corner of the South that the Civil War had ended and that the Emancipation Proclamation — which had been issued by the late President, Abraham Lincoln, nearly two and a half years before — had made them free people. "Juneteenth" has come to be celebrated as a significant marker in the continuing story of human liberation.

News has just reached me that my time as Chairman and as a Director of the United Republican Fund of Illinois is at an end. I certainly do not mean to equate my 18 years of service, as a Governor, a Director, the Secretary, the General Counsel, the President, and the Chairman, of the URF with slavery; to the contrary, my work for the URF has been a labor of love in the cause of freedom, and I have been honored to hold these posts. But it is always appropriate to notice when milestones in one's life coincide with anniversaries of great events in the history of our nation.

I congratulate you, Steve, my successor as Chairman, and you, Denis, my successor (and predecessor) as President, upon your assumptions of office, and I thank you, and all those in leadership positions, for taking up the work of the URF at this crucial time in the history of our State. As the URF nears its Diamond Jubilee, the Republican Party of Illinois enters upon a time of transition that can affect the liberty, safety, and welfare of the people of Illinois for decades to come. May the URF grow from strength to strength, always in its great role as the conservative conscience of the Republican Party in Illinois.

Sincerely yours,



Joseph A. Morris

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cc: URF Governors and Directors