

**Michelle J. Courier**  
Boone County State's Attorney

**July 14, 2009**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Boone County State's Attorney Courier Takes Proactive Step against Gangs**

Boone County State's Attorney Michelle Courier announced today that her office has filed a civil lawsuit against the Latin Kings street gang under the Illinois Street Gang Terrorism Omnibus Prevention Act. Passed in 1993 by the Illinois General Assembly, this law recognizes the fact that street gangs are operating throughout Illinois and their activities present a clear and present danger to public order and safety that no society should be required to endure without redress.

"Gangs are here," commented Courier. "They are on our streets, in our parks, and in our schools. They need to go. The filing of this lawsuit is another tool we can use to combat street gangs. We are seeking a long-term proactive prosecution of the entire gang rather than relying solely on the reactive prosecution of individual gang members."

The lawsuit alleges that in Belvidere and Boone County, since 2004, members of the Latin Kings street gang engaged in, among other criminal activities, unlawful possession and use of weapons, criminal defacement of property, aggravated battery, and unlawful delivery of controlled substances.

"We have and will continue to aggressively prosecute crimes involving individual gang members. Now, through this civil lawsuit, we have an opportunity to undermine the backbone of the gang organization by obtaining a court order which prohibits gang members from associating with each other. This will be more effective than relying solely on the individual prosecution of gang members," remarked Courier.

The complaint names the Latin Kings as a defendant, along with more than 30 known Latin Kings gang members in the Belvidere and Boone County area. It seeks injunctive relief against the Latin Kings street gang and all of its members. Courier is requesting, among other things, an order prohibiting gang members from associating with each other anywhere in public view; possessing or discharging any firearms; using, possessing, delivering or manufacturing any illegal or controlled substances; directing or participating in any assaults or batteries; and applying any gang graffiti to public or private property. Courier is further requesting that the Latin Kings be prohibited from being present in several local parks that have been frequented by the street gang. Courier is also seeking monetary damages from the Latin Kings to help offset the costs incurred by law enforcement in combating gangs.

“I would like to thank the Belvidere City Police Department for going above and beyond the call of duty in helping to prepare this case as well as the Boone County Sheriff’s Department for their assistance in serving the named defendants,” commented Courier. “We are hopeful that this action will further encourage support in our community for closer cooperation and collaboration to combat street gang activity.”