

PRESS RELEASE

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MELANIE FORD TO ANNOUNCE HER CAMPAIGN FOR REELECTION AS ST. LOUIS COUNTY ATTORNEY

St. Louis County Attorney Melanie Ford will kick off the campaign season on May 17, 2010 by formally announcing her bid for reelection. The public is invited to join her for root beer floats served by former Senator Becky Lourey at the Ford campaign office, 24 N. 21st Ave. West in Duluth at 4:30 p.m.. Attorney Ford will then outline her major accomplishments in office and agenda for her next four years in office. At 5:30, Duluth City Councilor Sharla Gardner, with Claire Kirch and Joel Sipress, will host a fundraiser for Ford at Carmody Irish Pub, 308 E. Superior St. Duluth.

Ford has kept her campaign promise to address crime in a way that holds offenders accountable and addresses victims' needs. She has brought innovative strategies for crime prevention into the county by working with schools to address truancy and working with students to keep them in school. Her collaboration with the Hibbing School District succeeded in reducing unexcused absences at the high school from 11,500 in her first year in office to under 3,000 this year. Juvenile delinquency rates in the County have dropped 10% in each of the last two years.

Ford is also bringing much needed change to the juvenile justice system. "After listening to concerns of people involved with the juvenile justice system and seeing the statistics that show that over a third of the children placed in pretrial detention are kids of color," said Ford, "I initiated reform designed to reduce the number of children in unnecessarily in detention, increase public safety, eliminate racial disparities, and enhance the chances that these children will reach their full potential as adults. By safely minimizing detention, we can redirect the funds where they will have a positive impact on the lives of our children and their families." Over 150 professionals and community members are involved in this initiative, now in its second year and funded by grants from the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Office of Justice Programs.

“I am running for reelection to continue these positive changes for St. Louis County. By bringing the community into government and acknowledging the diversity of the citizens of our County, our community will be a safe and desirable place to live. We don’t want our children to look back on us and say we failed.”

For more information about Ford’s initiatives, visit her campaign website at www.votemelanieford.com.