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**Gov. Blagojevich signs legislation creating Jane Addams Day**  
*December 10th will honor Hull House founder each year*

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Rod R. Blagojevich today signed **House Bill 5243**, which designates each December 10<sup>th</sup> as Jane Addams Day in honor of the native Illinoisan’s important contributions to her home state and the world. Today’s bill signing coincides with the 71<sup>st</sup> anniversary of Ms. Addam’s death. The legislation, an initiative of Lieutenant Governor Pat Quinn, was sponsored by Rep. Barbara Flynn Currie (D – Chicago) and Sen. Mattie Hunter (D – Chicago).

“Jane Addams brought together not only a neighborhood in Chicago through her work with Hull House, but also the world as she attempted to promote peace before World War II,” said Gov. Blagojevich. “We are all so proud that she is a native Illinoisan, and glad to be able to pay tribute to her each year with this new day in her honor.”

“It is a proud day when the first woman to be honored with a commemorative day in our State is Jane Addams of Cedarville, Illinois, who was the first American woman to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize,” said Lt. Governor Quinn.

Jane Addams was born in Cedarville, Illinois, just north of Freeport in Stephenson County, on September 6, 1860. After graduating from what is now Rockford College and then traveling around the world, Addams returned to Illinois and founded Hull House in 1889 with her lifelong friend Ellen Gates Starr, in what is now the University Village area of Chicago. One of the first settlement houses in the United States, Hull House was not only a homeless shelter, a soup kitchen, and a public bath in a time when many of the area tenements lacked running water, but also a venue that provided social and educational opportunities to nearly 2,000 people a week in the largely immigrant neighborhood.

“Jane Addams was a courageous leader who founded Chicago’s first settlement house for the city’s most vulnerable residents,” Rep. Currie said. “Addams dedicated herself to child care, legal aid, and health care on behalf minorities, immigrants, and low-income communities. She was the first American woman to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. She is a tribute to all who came before her, and a model to all who’ve come after.”

“Jane Addams was a leader on many fronts, organizing the women’s suffrage and pacifist movements,” said Sen. Hunter. “I admire what she was able to accomplish during her life. Her commitment to helping others should not be forgotten. It is important that we remember her and acknowledge the influence she has had on the people of Illinois. ”

In addition to founding Hull House, Addams was active as a humanitarian in the fight to stop child labor, and in the suffrage and pacifism movements. She was a founding member of the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the National Foundation of Settlement Houses and Neighborhood Centers, also serving as its first president in 1911. In 1931, she was the first American woman awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her work as the president of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Addams passed away on May 21, 1935.

Hull House is now a museum on the University of Illinois at Chicago campus in tribute to Jane Addams and her work.

The legislation becomes effective January 1, 2007.