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**Governor Blagojevich announces that
Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum
has welcomed its 1 millionth visitor**

*1 millionth visitor reached in less than two years since
opening, fastest pace set by any Presidential Museum*

Springfield, Ill. Governor Rod R. Blagojevich today announced that the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum welcomed its 1 millionth visitor since opening in April of 2005. Reaching the 1 millionth milestone in less than two years is believed to be the fastest paced record set by any Presidential Museum. The Clinton Library reached 800,000 visitors in its first two years of operation. Officials with the Clinton Foundation anticipate reaching 1 million visitors sometime in 2007.

Craig Schone of Chapin, Illinois was welcomed as the Museum's 1 millionth visitor.

"This accomplishment in such a short time is a testament to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum, the city of Springfield and Illinois," said Gov. Blagojevich. "Since April of 2005, folks from around the state, the nation, and the world have experienced the remarkable story of Lincoln — a man of great integrity and perseverance and one of our nation's greatest leaders."

Gov. Blagojevich opened the Presidential Museum with President George W. Bush and a host of dignitaries in April of 2005. Held in Union Square Park across from the Museum, the dedication concluded two decades of planning and hard work, bringing the public and private life of Abraham Lincoln to the forefront. In its first year, the ALPLM attracted more than 600,000 visitors, doubling first year attendance predictions. Visitors have come from every state in the nation and a number of countries around the world. School children make up a significant portion of visitors.

"We at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum are thrilled to welcome our millionth visitor", said Rick Beard, Executive Director of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum. "As we prepare for the bicentennial of Mr. Lincoln's birth over the next two years, we look forward to telling even more visitors the important story of our 16th president's life and times."

"Drawing a million visitors to this museum in its first 21 months is a triumph for Springfield and for Illinois. But

most of all it is a validation of the bold concept of this museum — to tell a 19th century story in ways that audiences of the 21st century are wholeheartedly embracing," said Julie Cellini, Board Chairperson, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency.

Attendance numbers aside, the ALPLM is proud of several other accomplishments since the April 2005 opening, including three blockbuster exhibits, '*Blood on the Moon*', '*Christmas at the White House*' and '*Mrs. President: From Martha to Laura*.' With Foundation support, the ALPLM unveiled new programs such as *Evenings to Remember*, featuring former Illinois Governor Jim Thompson, former Illinois Congressman Dan Rostenkowski, Pulitzer-prize winning author and historian Doris Kearns Goodwin and acclaimed television journalist Bill Kurtis. The ALPLM also launched the Jim Edgar Lecture Series, featuring Pulitzer-prize winning historian David McCullough and author/journalist David Brooks.

Upcoming events include '*Tales from the Crypt: A History of the Lincoln Tomb*.' This exhibit will relive the events and decisions surrounding the creation of the Lincoln Tomb — from the tomb raiders to the plots to steal Lincoln's body continuing through the restoration of the site and reburying of Lincoln in 1901. In addition, the exhibit will look at the caretakers that have protected this historic site through the years. All this and more will be on exhibit February 3 through March 25, 2007.

Then debuting in April 2007, the Museum will present '*Mary Todd Lincoln: First Lady of Controversy*.' The Mary Todd Lincoln Show will tell the story of a young Mary Todd in Kentucky, her troubled courtship and eventual marriage to the young lawyer Abraham Lincoln. Continue on her path as Mary assumes her new role as wife and mother, taking charge of running the household and raising a family. As First Lady, Mary undertakes a major renovation of the White House that had been left in neglect. The tragedy of war, the loss of her son Willie and the assassination of President Lincoln all left emotional scars that never healed. Robert Todd Lincoln convinced that his mother was insane, had her committed for a brief time in a private sanitarium. Mary's efforts to be released and her subsequent travels in Europe are all revealed. '*Mary Todd Lincoln: First Lady of Controversy*,' April 28, 2007 — Oct. 28, 2007.

The 1 millionth visitor received a key to the City of Springfield, presented by Mayor Tim Davlin, two tickets the Inaugural Swearing-in Ceremony and the Inaugural Ball, and a gift basket from the Museum Store, compliments of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation.

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