



## Gery J. Chico

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### Partner

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**Gery J. Chico** combines an accomplished background in city government and education, a distinguished law career and a solid business background. He has practiced law and represented leading companies in Chicago and the nation over the past 27 years principally in the areas of real estate and land use, government regulation and business counseling. He has a unique understanding of both the public and private sectors given his strong background in public service, the law and business.

Since April of 2004, Mr. Chico has been a Senior Partner at the Chicago law firm of Chico & Nunes, P.C. In March 2004, he was a candidate for the U.S. Senate. He also served as Special Counsel to the law firm of Arnstein & Lehr in 2003 and 2004. Mr. Chico was a senior partner in the law firm of Altheimer & Gray from 1996 through 2003. He was a partner at Sidley & Austin in 1995 and 1996, serving as head of the firm's State and Local Government practice. While an associate at that firm from 1987 through 1991, he also served as General Counsel to the Chicago Development Council, the city's largest real estate development association. He worked for the City of Chicago Department of Planning from 1977 through 1980, and later as a senior staff member for the Chicago City Council - Committee on Finance from 1980 through 1987. Mr. Chico graduated from the Loyola University School of Law in 1985, where he was a member of the Loyola Law Review.

Mr. Chico served as Chief of Staff to Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley from 1992 through 1995. Prior to that he was Deputy Chief of Staff for the Mayor. In 1995, Mayor Daley appointed Mr. Chico President of the Board of Trustees of the Chicago Public Schools, the nation's third largest school system. Mayor Daley reappointed Mr. Chico for a second term in 1999. During his tenure as President, the Chicago Public Schools initiated a broad series of nationally recognized education and fiscal reforms which led to six straight years of student performance increases, six years of balanced budgets, six years of labor peace and the unprecedented rebuilding of Chicago's public school buildings. All of this activity led to the turnaround of one of the most troubled public school systems in the nation.

In June, 2011, Governor Pat Quinn named Mr. Chico as Chairman of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). ISBE is responsible for the overall education of students in Illinois. ISBE administers more than \$10 Billion in funding each year for Illinois public schools. From March, 2010, until October, 2010, Mr. Chico served as the Chairman of the City Colleges of Chicago. Prior to this appointment, Mr. Chico served as President of the Board of Commissioners of the Chicago Park District from 2007 - 2010. Mr. Chico also

served as a Commissioner of the Public Building Commission of Chicago. The Commission is responsible for the construction of hundreds of millions of dollars annually of schools, park field houses, libraries, fire and police stations and other public facilities.

Mr. Chico has received many awards and honors over his career including: University of Illinois Alumni Achievement Award; Distinguished Award for Excellence by the Illinois Bar Foundation; Citizen of the Year by the City Club of Chicago; Outstanding School Board President by the Illinois State Board of Education; Everett McKinley Dirksen Award for Outstanding Public Service; Champion of the Public Interest by the Business and Professional People for the Public Interest; and Chicagoan of the Year by Chicago Magazine.

Mr. Chico is a former member of the Board of Directors of the Chicago Urban League, DePaul University, the University of Illinois Alumni Association and Erikson Institute. Mr. Chico was appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court as member of the committee overseeing the Judicial Performance Evaluation Program. Mr. Chico was one of the founders of the Mexican-American Chamber of Commerce (now the 1400 member Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce). He has written a column for the Chicago Sun-Times and remains active in many other professional, civic and charitable organizations.

#### **Admissions**

- ▶ Illinois

#### **Memberships, Civic and Charitable**

- ▶ Illinois State Board of Education
- ▶ Illinois Education Foundation
- ▶ Judicial Evaluation Committee

#### **Education**

- ▶ J.D., Loyola University School of Law 1985
- ▶ B.A., University of Illinois at Chicago 1978

