

U.S. Attorney John Lausch Announces Resignation Effective March 11th



John Lausch, the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, announced his departure on March 11th, leaving a post last filled by former President Donald Trump in 2017. Lausch's departure will result in the temporary appointment of First Assistant U.S. Attorney Morris Pasqual, who will serve as the U.S. attorney until a replacement is nominated by President Joe Biden and confirmed by the Senate.

A Chicago U.S. Attorney's Office spokesperson stated that Lausch had not made any public statements regarding his plans. U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland stated in January that Lausch declined to accept a long-term special counsel role investigating whether Biden improperly handled sensitive government documents as he was planning to leave for the private sector.

Trump, a Republican, nominated Lausch for the U.S. attorney post during his first year in office, and Lausch was kept in the role by the Democratic Biden administration at the request of Illinois' U.S. senators Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth, despite Biden terminating the appointments of other Trump-era U.S. attorneys.

Previous U.S. attorneys in Chicago have received prominent jobs upon returning to the private sector. Patrick Fitzgerald served from 2001 to 2012 as a litigation partner at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom. Zachary Fardon, Lausch's immediate predecessor, leads King & Spalding's government matters practice and Chicago office.

As the search for a new U.S. attorney begins, the Biden administration will need to carefully consider the qualifications and experience of potential candidates and their ability to manage a large and complex office and work collaboratively with federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies. The new U.S. attorney will have big shoes to fill but will also have the opportunity to build on the critical work done by their predecessors in the Northern District of Illinois.