

Former Ill. governor ordered to prison

by UPI

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. -- A federal appeals court panel has ordered Illinois' former Republican governor, George Ryan, to report to prison Nov. 7 to begin serving a 6 ½ year sentence. Ryan, 73, who served one-term as governor from 1999 to 2003, was convicted on federal corruption charges in April 2006 after a six-month trial. He was accused of accepting cash, gifts and vacations from friends and lobbyists in return for state contracts. He and co-defendant Larry Warner have been free on bond pending appeals, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported Thursday. But a three-member panel of the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals denied their motion to remain free pending a decision by the U.S. Supreme Court whether to hear their appeal that the long trial was unfair and unjust. A request for a stay was filed with Justice John Paul Stevens Wednesday. The panel, in a split decision Wednesday, denied Ryan's effort to avoid reporting to prison, saying his "day of reckoning" had come. The grandfatherly Ryan was ordered to report to the minimum-security federal prison camp at Duluth, Minn., on Nov. 7 to begin his sentence. His legal team is already trying to have him reassigned to the federal facility in Oxford, Wis., that is closer to his family in Illinois.

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