

Court rejects former Ill. gov's appeal

by UPI

CHICAGO -- A 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals panel Tuesday rejected former Illinois Gov. George Ryan's appeal for a new trial on fraud and corruption charges. The 2-1 decision clears the way for the 73-year-old ex-governor to begin serving a 78-month sentence he received after a six-month trial last year, WLS-TV, Chicago, reported. The Chicago Tribune said Ryan's legal team may file another appeal with the full 11 judge court. "We conclude that the district court handled most problems that arose in an acceptable manner, and that whatever error remained was harmless," Judge Diane Wood wrote on behalf of the three-judge panel. "We therefore affirm the convictions." Two jurors were removed during Ryan's federal trial because they had not disclosed criminal backgrounds. Ryan was convicted of corruption for handing out state contracts to co-defendant Larry Warner and other friends in return for gifts, trips and other kickbacks. Warner was sentenced to nearly 42 months in prison.

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