RELEASE: September 6, 2012

Castor receives highest honor from Scottish Rite Freemasons

Norristown, PA (September 6, 2012) – Montgomery County Commissioner, and former District Attorney, Bruce L. Castor, Jr. was installed as a 33rd Degree member of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry at the organization’s 200th annual meeting recently in Cleveland, Ohio.

Castor is the only Pennsylvania freemason this year to be honored with the 33rd Degree “At-Large” in recognition of his long and successful career in law enforcement, government, and as a lawyer with the Blue Bell-based firm Elliott, Greenleaf and Siedzikowski.

Achieving the 33rd Degree is the highest honor that can be bestowed upon a Scottish Rite Mason. The honor is not campaigned for and often candidates do not even know they are being considered. In fact, Castor was unaware that he was being considered for this distinction until he received a telephone call from a Scottish Rite Official attending the National Conference in August of 2011 in Chicago. Castor said he “spent the last year undergoing the necessary preparation to be ready for the installation.”

“Commissioner Castor has had a remarkable career in law enforcement and public service, and this honor is well deserved,” said Josh Shapiro, chair of the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners. “Commissioner (Leslie) Richards and I are very happy to see his service and dedication recognized.”

Castor and his wife, Elizabeth, travelled to Cleveland for the August 28th installation. A recipient of the 33rd Degree in Scottish Rite Freemasonry in the Northern Jurisdiction (which includes Pennsylvania) is by right an honorary member of their Supreme Council. The formal title for recipients of the 33rd Degree is that of “Sovereign Grand Inspector General,” and the member is referred to formally as “The Illustrious” before the use of his full name.

Castor became a mason in 1991 at Charity Lodge #190 in Jeffersonville, PA. He is also a member of the Scottish Rite of the Valley of Allentown, the LuLu Shrine in Plymouth Meeting, and the Royal Arch
of the York Rite in Collegeville.

"Freemasonry has guided how I have tried to live life for more than 20 years," Castor said. "Honesty in all things, integrity in the face of adversity, and helping people in need is what masons expect from one another. Receiving the 33rd Degree is the greatest professional and personal honor ever bestowed on me. To me, no recognition granted by man could ever mean more."

The fraternity of the Freemasons is the largest and oldest fraternal organization in the world. The group traces its roots to a brotherhood of men who, by learning the secrets of geometry, physics, and artistry were able erect over the centuries lasting buildings such as palaces and cathedrals. Tradition has it that the fraternity of masons built the Temple of King Solomon as described in the Old Testament of The Bible.

As time passed, the fraternity of masons began accepting members who were not specifically trained in the physical building of structures. These men were taught that the concepts that went into a well-constructed building were the same elements that helped people to live upright and moral lives. Freemasons are expected to give back to their community, never permit evil to prevail over good, and leave a lasting legacy.

Montgomery County Commissioner Bruce L. Castor, Jr. and his wife, Elizabeth, traveled to Cleveland, Ohio where Castor received the highest honor bestowed by the Scottish Rite Freemasons.