

# Cicero ex-cop says he helped set up candidate

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*Federal Courts Reporter*

A former Cicero police officer is alleging a town police superintendent and Edward Vrdolyak, a long-time attorney for Cicero, threatened that he would lose his job if he continued to cooperate with an FBI investigation into town cops allegedly setting up a political rival of Town President Betty Loren-Maltese.

In a federal lawsuit to be filed today, former police officer Lorne Stenson describes how he went along at first with setting up Joseph Mario Moreno, who ran unsuccessfully against Loren-Maltese for town president in the 2001 race. Stenson was the officer who

pulled Moreno over for a DUI arrest in December 2000.

Stenson balked, though, at demands he brush off the FBI after suspicions arose about Moreno's arrest.

Prosecutors eventually dropped the case against Moreno. Stenson was fired last year.

Cicero officials "made him the fall guy because someone had to take the blame for setting up Moreno. His rights were trampled in the process, and his career too," said Stenson's attorney, Jon Lovey.

Stenson, 32, works security and can't get a job as a cop after Cicero officials trashed his reputation, Lovey said. Stenson said through his attorney that he is suing to be

vindicated as a good officer.

Stenson names in the lawsuit Loren-Maltese, now in prison for corruption, as well as Thomas Rowan, the former superintendent for the town police.

Vrdolyak is not named as a defendant but played a key role, according to the lawsuit.

When Stenson told Vrdolyak he had gone to the FBI, Vrdolyak "became angry" and told the officer "he was causing big problems and would lose his job," the lawsuit alleges.

The lawsuit also claims Cicero officials provided Stenson with an attorney, in large part to prevent him from talking to the feds.

Vrdolyak could not be reached for comment.