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Robert F. Rich is Director of the Institute of Government and Public Affairs and Professor of Law, Political Science, Medical Humanities and Social Sciences, Community Health, and Health Policy and Administration at the University of Illinois. He was the Director of the Institute of Government and Public Affairs from 1986 to 1997, and became Director, once again, as of July of 2005.

In 2004, he was a Visiting Scholar at the Max Planck Institute for Foreign and International Social Law in Munich. In the 2002-03 academic year, Rich was the Mercator Professor at the Humboldt University in Berlin, Germany, where he has also been appointed as a Permanent Fellow in the European Center for Comparative Government and Public Policy. In the 1993-94 academic year, he was on sabbatical leave in Washington, D.C., at the Johns Hopkins University Center for the Study of American Government; he was also a "Special Guest" at the Brookings Institution.

Before joining the faculty of the University of Illinois, Rich was on the faculty of the Heinz School of Urban and Public Affairs at Carnegie-Mellon University (1982-86), the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University (1976-82), the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research (1975-76), and the University of Chicago (1974-75).

He is the author of seven books and over 50 articles in the areas of health law and policy, federalism, information policy, and science and technology policy. His most recent book, Consumer Choice: Social Welfare and Health Policy was published in 2005. He is also the co-editor of the new Encyclopedia on Health Services Research, published in May of 2009.

He is married and has three children.