



*From the desk of
State Representative Jim Sacia*

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Contact: Rep. Jim Sacia
(815) 232-0774

*****Guest Column*****

The intensity of our weeks continues as we attempt to meet our deadline for bill introductions. In two separate committees in the past two days, Appropriations Public Safety and Judiciary II Criminal Law, lawmakers heard more than seven hours of testimony. Combine that with the numerous other committees, actual session and receptions we are expected to attend and you have a very busy week from early each morning until late into the night. All enjoyable, but very busy.

In Appropriations, Illinois Department of Transportation Secretary Milton Sees testified to needing an additional appropriation of \$20 million for the year due to extensive overtime, "snowbird" hires, excessive salt use, and pothole repair statewide due to the excessively hard winter.

Virginia Cooper of Davis had sent me numerous petitions demanding the necessary repairs to Highway 75 from Freeport to Durand. Citizens of the 89th district who travel that road have reason to be very unhappy. In 2007, the \$5 million that had been included in the state budget to resurface the highway was diverted to other projects. Mr. Sees has been very receptive to my contacts in the past and he was again as I was able to personally hand him the petitions in committee and get the presentation on the record.

I have signed on as chief co-sponsor to House Bill 5152 offered by State Representative Bill Black (R-Danville). This bill prohibits road improvement money being diverted

from projects short of a catastrophe much like the bridge collapse in Minnesota last fall. I think it will pass both chambers hands down.

One of the bills in the Criminal Law Committee certainly merits mention and it took me back to my days as a young FBI agent in Rockford, Illinois in the early 1970's. House Bill 5908 offered by State Representative Chapin Rose (R-Mahomet) requires written notice to family members of victims of major crimes to receive at least 30 days notice of parole hearings. Several recent cases were cited where criminals were released as someone had not been at the hearing to testify as to the facts of the crime, obviously because the victims families had not been notified.

That fateful day in 1974, I responded to a bank robbery in progress and a hostage being taken only to be diverted by radio to a barber shop on 2nd Street in Loves Park, Illinois where a gun battle was in progress between police and the bank robbers. When I arrived, a bank robber was wounded and paramedics were trying to save the life of Detective Mike Mayborne of the Winnebago County Sheriff's Department and I was advised by Sergeant Gene Coots that Mayborne was deceased. I had just met the detective two weeks previous and his funeral has never left my mind – watching his devastated wife, Terry, and her two young children was heart breaking.

Terry offered oral testimony before a Senate committee on a companion bill, Senate Bill 2254. Her written testimony was then shared with lawmakers in the House and it was a classic example of the importance of this bill. It's seldom a bill has such personal impact, but this particular situation is very close to my heart.

Our Scholastic Committee consisting of seven area school superintendents will be meeting in the near future to award the 8 college scholarships my office has the privilege of awarding each year to students living in the 89th District.

As always, you can reach me, Sally or Barb at 815/232-0774 or e-mail us at jimsacia@aeroinc.net. You can also visit my website at www.jimsacia.com. It's always a pleasure to hear from you.