

General Assembly back in full swing

Well it's March. And that means baseball is right around the corner. The blooms are starting to pop out on trees. The sun's coming up earlier and staying around longer. And the State Capitol is full of legislators, staff members, lobbyists and tourists scurrying from floor to floor trying to keep up with the frantic pace of lawmaking in Illinois.

The General Assembly is in full swing.

TOI, as always, has a full agenda of items we are following. Some are issues that we put forward. Some are ideas formulated by others that we support. But most are proposals that have a negative impact on the operation of township government and our ability to provide services to our constituents.

Here's a rundown of some of those proposals so far:

TOI-supported

House Bill 5228 (Rep. Ed Sullivan, R-Mundelein) would allow townships to register cats and dogs if approved by electors at a town meeting.

Senate Bill 3435 (Sen. John Sullivan, D-Rushville) would prohibit plowing or shoveling of snow from residential driveway onto a public highway if it constitutes a traffic hazard.

Senate Bill 2514 (Sen. Pamela Althoff, R-Crystal Lake) prohibits transfers of funds from the State Road Fund to other areas.

Senate Bill 3170 (Sen. Suzi Schmidt, R-Lake Villa) allows townships to aggregate and market electrical loads for residential and small business customers.

TOI-opposed

House Bill 4973 (Rep. Rosemary Mulligan, R-Park Ridge) allows for dissolution of office of township highway commissioner or assessor in Cook County by referendum.

House Bill 4987 (Rep. Karen May, D-Highland Park) sets up transitional procedures if an individual township is eliminated in counties of 50,000 or more.

House Bill 5372 (Rep. Brandon Phelps, D-Eldorado/Senate Bill 3639 (Sen. Gary Forby, D-Benton) requires payment of prevailing wage to snow plow drivers.

Senate Bill 2862 (Sen. Martin Sandoval, D-Chicago) prohibits capture of inflation under PTELL if total equalized assessed value in a taxing district decreases from the previous year. This bill was presented in the House last fall and was overwhelmingly defeated.

House Bill 3608 (Rep. Jack Franks, R-Woodstock) provides the same proposal contained in Senate Bill 2862, but limits it to Cook County.

Senate Bill 2874 (Sen. Jeff Schoenberg, D-Evanston) provides for a binding referendum for elimination of Evanston Township.