



Legislative Report

General Assembly heading for home stretch

AS OF PRESS TIME, the Illinois General Assembly is heading for the home stretch of the 2011 spring session with major budget issues left unsolved. Following passage of the biggest income tax increase in the state's history in January, lawmakers and Governor Pat Quinn still faced a shortfall of several billion dollars before they could adjourn for the summer. Next month's issue will focus on the final deliberations of the spring session.

In other developments affecting townships:

Local government abolition task force soundly rejected

SB 173 (*Sen. Terry Link*), the latest version of legislation to establish a task force with nearly binding authority to slate elimination of any of thousands of local governmental bodies, was soundly defeated by a 14-30 margin on May 3 in the Illinois Senate. It narrowly passed out of Senate Executive Committee prior to the Easter recess. The bill would have granted the 8-member commission authority to identify any and all local governments for abolition and the General Assembly could only consider the recommendations en masse without any changes. TOI argued the bill usurped the authority of the General Assembly and the right of the voters to determine the creation or abolition of townships as guaranteed by the State Constitution.

Other legislation pushed by TOI is moving along in the legislature:

House Bill 3152 (*Rep. Randy Ramey; Sen. William Haine*) – Authorizes a township or road district to sell surplus property upon request of the highway commissioner or vote of the township board rather than just once a year by declaration at the annual town meeting ... passed both Houses. It now goes to the Governor for his signature.

House Bill 2259 (*Rep. Ramey; Sen. Maggie Crotty*) – clarifies that appeal hearings for denials of township

general assistance are exempt from the Freedom of Information and Open Meetings Acts ... passed both Houses. It now goes to the Governor for his signature.

House Bill 2820 (*Rep. Ramey*) – Clarifies that referendum submitted at annual town meetings must pertain to township business ... passed the House; held in Senate Local Government Committee.

Negotiations continue between TOI and other local government groups and the Illinois Press Association to reduce the cost of **publication of local government reports in the newspaper** (*Originally contained in House Bill 1869 – Rep. Frank Mautino*).




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