



# Legislative Report

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## *General Assembly to take on new look in 2013*

**T**HE ILLINOIS STATE CONSTITUTION mandates that the General Assembly redistrict itself every 10 years to accommodate shifts in population and geography. As such, even though Democrats control both chambers of the legislature and the Governor's office and drew the maps themselves, there will be some significant changes afoot as we head toward next month's filing deadline.

Just since they adjourned in June, three veteran lawmakers have left office and have been replaced by new appointees. Reps. Ron Stephens (R-Highland) and Dan Reitz (D-Steeleville) retired, while Rep. Mark Beaubien (R-Wauconda) passed away suddenly over the summer.

But once the dust clears, and elections get underway next year, there promises to be a whole host of new faces in and around the House and Senate chambers.

There are as many as 16 additional incumbent legislators who may be stepping down at the conclusion of their current terms. This includes some veteran lawmakers and TOI friends like Assistant Majority Leader Joe Lyons (D-Chicago), Rep. Dave Winters (R-Shirland) and Sen. David Koehler (D-Peoria), chair of the Senate Local Government Committee who is trying to move up to a congressional seat next year.

All told, there will be at least nine open seats where an incumbent does not appear to be running.

But the real interest will turn on several Republican primaries where incumbents are pitted against one another. With the Democrats drawing the map boundaries, they were careful to take care of those incumbents who they felt would be seeking reelection by placing them in districts with as much friendly turf as possible, as well as by not putting two Democrats in the same district. As a result, there are six seats where incumbent Republican legislators will be running against each other.

Those include: Rep. Patti Bellock (R-Hinsdale) versus Rep. Dennis Reboletti (R-Elmhurst) in the House, and in the Senate, Rep. Chris Nybo (R-Elmhurst) versus Sen. Kirk Dillard (R-Hinsdale), Sen. Shane Cultra (R-Onarga) versus Rep. Jason Barickman (R-Champaign), Sen. Dave Syverson (R-Rockford) versus Sen. Christine Johnson (R-Shabbona), Sen. Kyle McCarter (R-Lebanon) versus Sen. John Jones (R-Mt. Vernon)

and Sen. Carol Pankau (R-Roselle) versus Rep. Randy Ramey (R-Carol Stream).

So if you add the losers of those races to the list of those members who are leaving voluntarily, there will be a very large group of "lame duck" legislators in 2012, as well as a very large group of new legislators who will take office in 2013.

As we watch the action from the township perspective, it is important for each of us to get to know the candidates who are running for the legislature and impress on them early on the value of township government.



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