



From Your Associate Director

2009 IS OFF TO A GREAT START! With the 96th General Assembly well underway, in addition to our own TOI Legislative agenda, we are reviewing the multitude of bill introductions in an effort to ensure appropriate consideration of the government closest to the people—Township Government!

January 14, 2009 marked a new beginning for the Illinois General Assembly. The Illinois legislature has many tasks before it. Under new leadership, new chamber rules, as well as the newly-elected members, the 96th General Assembly is sure to be successful.

The defeat of the Constitutional Convention referendum where Illinois voters were asked “whether they wanted the state to conduct a constitutional convention” clearly takes the position that we are satisfied with the framework of Illinois state government. The question received 5,539,172 votes in all 102 counties. 3,062,721 rejected the referendum. (*Source: Illinois State Board of Elections*)

In 2009, as a new general assembly convenes, I encourage all townships to work toward fostering your relationships with your Representatives and Senators. Contact them and invite them to attend your next township board meeting or annual township meeting. Keep them aware of the projects/needs of your township. This is a great opportunity to reach out. Encourage your township board to attend the annual TOI Topics Day event. Schedule a meeting with your State Representative or Senator to convey the township message.

Local Government Week Returns in 2009

As designated by the Illinois General Assembly annually, the first week of March is Local Government Week. March 1-7 is just that. This week provides an opportunity for township officials to get their local residents involved. The goal is to bring attention to the need for strong, independent, and active township government in Illinois. Utilize this as an opportunity to recognize the valuable contributions made

by township residents serving their communities. Oftentimes, there is little attention provided in middle and high school civics classes on local government. More importantly, to our cause—township government. Through a joint effort with townships across the state of Illinois, we can bring additional attention to our unit of government through organized events associated with the annual designation of Local Government Week.

Your association, TOI, encourages you to invite schools, local civic groups, business leaders and the news media to participate in celebrating this annual event. Hold an open house; work with local schools to introduce the value of local government activities. Recognize township officials and community volunteers for their efforts. There are many of you in our great state.

Through the partnership established with the Illinois Association of Counties, Illinois Municipal League and the University of Illinois Extension, an event is being planned in Springfield for **Tuesday, March 3**. Various state agencies that work with local government will be exhibiting in the Rotunda of the Illinois State Capitol. Schedule a trip to Springfield to attend these activities. Speeches are being planned for 12 noon in the rotunda. I hope you can make it.

Topics Day Plans Underway

Mark your calendars that the **2009 ANNUAL TOPICS DAY** event is scheduled for **April 21** in Springfield. TOI staff is working on the agenda for the event. Check the TOI website www.toi.org and the March 2009 Perspective magazine for event details. You can also register by downloading and printing the registration form at www.toi.org. Remember to contact your state legislators regarding your visit to Springfield. Schedule some time to meet with them on April 21st. Calling in advance aids in ensuring the possibility of a visit.

Does your township have a website?

The TOI Web program provides simple, easy to use interface to build an informational website. TOI has more than 60 current subscribers in the program. For approximately \$12.50 per month, you can provide your township residents direct links to monthly newsletters, township activities, notices and special events.

To manage a site independently would cost more than \$4,000 annually. Currently, for \$150 annually, TOI manages all of the security software and page interfacing. You control the content and updating of material. Visit us at www.toi.org for additional information—join today!

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