



# Legislative Report

By Timothy S. Bramlet

TOI Legislative Consultant

## *The coast is clear! At least for the rest of the year*

AS THEY USED TO START the old TV serials with, “and when we last left you ...” So, when we last left you, the General Assembly had departed town late on the night of May 31 with no resolution of outstanding bills and spending authority ... and certainly no budget for the upcoming fiscal year. But in the few short weeks following adjournment, some cooler heads prevailed and **Governor Bruce Rauner** and the four legislative leaders came together to at least agree on a spending plan that will get them through the remainder of 2016. But with the exception of education funding, which extends for 12 months, all of the other authority expires on December 31, leaving the legislature and the Governor to face yet another fiscal cliff following the November elections.

So with the exception of the State Fair last month, nary a legislator has been seen near Springfield since the end of June. And no sightings are expected until veto session gets underway in mid-November.

The good news is that the full-scale attack on townships launched in early 2016 has fizzled out. Of the 15 bills that were introduced back in the spring that make it easier to abolish or consolidate townships—or some variation that strips our local autonomy—none passed. In fact, only one passed one chamber.

Your voices were heard. Our message that township government is that which is the most efficient in Illinois ... that is closest to its people ... reached the General Assembly. In the end, most legislators agreed.

The danger is only dormant for a short time, however. Once a new General Assembly is sworn in following the November 8 election, there will be a whole new effort to resurrect those ideas and we will once again be called to action to defend our form of government.

But for now...the coast is clear.

The following is one **final** listing of TOI's 2016 agenda with final action. My column in next month's issue of *Perspective* will focus on an important constitutional amendment that appears on the November 8 ballot to restrict Illinois Road Fund dollars to be spent only on road construction and maintenance.

**House Bill 747** (*Lang, D-Skokie; J. Cullerton, D-Chicago*) removes requirement for appraisal certification and continuing education for township assessors in

Cook County. **OPPOSE** Passed the House; held in Senate Executive Committee.

**House Bill 4968** (*Demmer, R-Dixon*); **Senate Bill 2462** (*Oberweis, R-Sugar Grove*); **Senate Bill 2412** (*Althoff, R-Crystal Lake*) – provides that all townships within a coterminous municipality may be consolidated by referendum. **OPPOSE** 4968 held in subcommittee; 2462 and 2412 held in Senate Local Government Committee.

**House Bill 4975** (*Yingling, D-Round Lake*) – makes it easier to abolish all townships within a county by citizens petition or county board vote. **OPPOSE** Held in House Rules Committee.

**House Bill 4980** (*Franks, D-Woodstock*); **Senate Bill 2470** (*Oberweis*); **Senate Bill 2288** (*Althoff*) – removes current statutory provisions that serve as disincentives to consolidating townships within a county. **OPPOSE** 4980 held in House Rules Committee; 2470 and 2288 held in Senate Local Government Committee.

**House Bill 5041** (*Stewart, R-Freeport*) – Exempts projects under \$20,000 from the Prevailing Wage Act. **SUPPORT** Held in House Rules Committee.

**HB 5522** (*Ives, R-Wheaton; Sandoval, D-Chicago*) – Requires units of local government with \$1 million budget or more to sponsor a website and post and keep current 14 different types of public information despite the fact that most of the information is already available elsewhere. **OPPOSE** Passed House; Held in Senate Assignments Committee.

**House Bill 5528** (*Phelps, D-Norris City*) – Makes MFT distribution to local governments a continuing appropriation and, therefore, not subject to being held up during a budget impasse. **SUPPORT** Held in House Rules Committee.

**HB 5688** (*Beiser, D-Alton*) – Expands allowable length of semitrailers to 65 feet from 55 feet on township and other highways. **OPPOSE** Held in House Rules Committee.

**House Bill 5759** (*Hoffman, D-Belleville*) – Requires bidders on prevailing wage projects to qualify as “responsible bidders.” **OPPOSE** Held in House Rules Committee.

**House Bill 5885** (*Kifowit*) – Removes the restriction limiting townships to no larger than 126 square miles. **OPPOSE** Held in House Rules Committee.

**House Bill 5996** (Sullivan, R-Mundelein) – Grants additional authority over township highway budgets to the township board. **OPPOSE** Held in House Rules Committee.

**Senate Bill 388** (Bush-Conroy) – Provides process for consolidation of various types of townships with one another or with a coterminous municipality if authorized by all of the township boards and approved by voters. **NEUTRAL** Passed the Senate; House Rules Committee.

**Senate Bill 389** (Morrison-Sente) – Allows a township board to put a question to voters on the ballot to abolish a township highway commissioner if the township has less than 15 miles of highways. **OPPOSE** Passed the Senate; House Rules Committee.

**Senate Bill 1529** (Link, D-Waukegan; Currie, D-Chicago) – Brings conformity between the Township Code and the Election Code as it relates to deadlines for notifying election authorities of township caucus primary results. **SUPPORT** Passed both houses; Governor signed; PA 99-522.

**Senate Bill 2287** (Althoff) – Allows for citizen petition for a binding referendum to abolish a single township and further enumerates transfer of responsibilities to the county. **OPPOSE** Held in Senate Local Government Committee.

**Senate Bill 2289** (Althoff) – Eliminates requirement that townships be no larger than 126 square miles, possess less than \$10 million in EAV, and allows for the county board to establish new township tax rates if consolidation occurs. **OPPOSE** Held in Senate Local Government Committee.

**Senate Bill 2525** (Morrison, D-Deerfield) – Eliminates stipends for county and township assessors. **OPPOSE** Re-referred to Senate Assignments Committee.

**Senate Bill 3181** (Oberweis, R-Barrington) – Allows, among other things, for a unit of local government to publish electronically certain information that now must appear as paid advertising in the local newspaper. **SUPPORT** Passed Senate Local Government Committee; held on Senate floor.



# ACCOUNTABILITY IN ACTION >>

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