



Legislative Report

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Consolidation measures dominate list

Township legislative agenda takes shape for spring session

AS WE SIT at the Easter Recess for the Illinois General Assembly in late March, the agenda for TOI has clearly unfolded. And most of it is comprised of anti-township bills.

A host of legislative proposals have been put forth in response to a task force report issued by the Lieutenant Governor's office that studied local government consolidation and unfunded mandates during 2015. Many of those proposals are opposed by TOI. Most seek to allow for easy abolition or consolidation of townships, notwithstanding the fact that studies show assumption of township duties by larger units of government will lead to cost INCREASES, rather than greater efficiency or cost-savings.

The bills, which are enumerated in the list below, are spread evenly between House and Senate sponsors. As of this time, the House has taken no action and have not assigned any of these proposals to a committee for hearing. If they are to be heard in a committee, they would have to be released from the Rules Committee, assigned to committee, and then have a hearing held during the first week the legislature returns in April.

The Senate has assigned its anti-township bills to the Senate Local Government Committee, where it is expected they will be re-directed to a subcommittee for further consideration. It is altogether likely that the subcommittee—and the committee as a whole—will move some type of related legislation out to the floor, but it is not yet known what that might be.

And, of course, there are other legislative issues of importance to townships that have also made it onto our agenda this year. The list below contains the more significant bills that TOI is tracking this spring:

Please note that Sen. Michael Connelly, R-Lisle relinquished sponsorship of SB 2464 to Sen. Dale Righter, R-Mattoon).

House Bill 4668 (Currie, D-Chicago) – makes a correction to the date when townships must file caucus nominees to the proper election authorities. **SUPPORT**

House Bill 4967 (McSweeney, R-Barrington Hills); **Senate Bill 2464** (Righter, R-Mattoon) – allows for referendum to be put on the ballot by petition to abolish any unit of local government. **OPPOSE**

House Bill 4968 (Demmer, R-Dixon); **Senate Bill 2462** (Duffy, R-Lake Barrington); **Senate Bill 2412** (Althoff, R-Crystal Lake) – provides that all townships within a coterminous municipality may be consolidated by referendum. **OPPOSE**

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**

House Bill 4980 (Franks, D-Woodstock); **Senate Bill 2470** (Duffy); **Senate Bill 2288** (Althoff) – removes current statutory provisions that serve as disincentives to consolidating townships within a county. **OPPOSE**

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

HB 5522 (Ives, R-Wheaton) – Requires units of local

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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**

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**

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

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

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

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

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**

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**

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

Senate Bill 3181 (*Duffy, 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**



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