



from your Executive Director

By Bryan E. Smith

TOI Executive Director

IN JUST A MONTH, on November 8, we will have the opportunity to vote for the candidates of our choice in the race for President, U.S. Senate, and a host of other state and county offices up for election.

If you are like me, the election can't come soon enough. We have been hit with an avalanche of television commercials, radio ads, and mailers, all trying to tell us why we should (or why we shouldn't) vote for a particular candidate. It seems like this has been going on all year, but it really kicked into high gear after Labor Day.

While the mainstream news media focuses most of its attention on the presidency and U.S. Senate, we cannot forget just how important our vote is in determining the winner in these races. While every race is important, it may be that to us, at the township government level, candidates for the Illinois General Assembly are more important.

As in past election years, the Township Officials of Illinois Political Action Committee (TOIPAC) has made endorsements for the General Assembly officers for the 2016 election. The results of the committee's endorsements are published elsewhere in this magazine.

This year, all 118 seats in the Illinois House of Representatives are up for election as well as part of the seats in the State Senate. TOIPAC sent letters to all candidates. Non-incumbents were asked if they were interested in being endorsed. If they were interested, they were

asked to respond to a few questions concerning issues townships and township officials face.

On the other hand, incumbents were asked to contact us only if they were not interested in being endorsed and no incumbent made that request. The voting records on key issues were examined for incumbents, as well as past support on issues as a gauge for determining support for township government of those incumbents seeking re-election. As mentioned earlier, the TOIPAC Committee met and eventually made the endorsements found in this issue.

I constantly remind our members that each of you has a localized and powerful political organization that is loyal to you. That loyalty to you and your township is a bargaining chip at your disposal when you talk with your legislators.

Active support of pro-township candidates by TOI members is vital. Be sure to talk to the candidates in your area running for the General Assembly. Volunteer for the campaigns of endorsed candidates and actively support them. All candidates are elected locally, one vote at a time, in each precinct in the state. If we keep that in mind, then our status as active local officials is elevated even more.

Remember, our collective votes will make a difference on November 8th.

REMINDER: All education credits are due to the TOI office by October 12 to count toward the total that will be used to determine townships that will earn an award during the Awards Breakfast at our Annual Educational Conference in November. Any educational events hosted by TOI are automatically counted toward your total. Credits must be earned at township related professional development events between October 1, 2015 and September 30, 2016. Contact amy@toi.org with questions.

CORRECTION: In my article last month about the 2017 Township Elections, I inadvertently left out the office of highway commissioners in the list of officials that will be up for election on April 4, 2017. All township officials will be up for election in 2017. I apologize for the omission.