



September Mayor's Report Tom Hoechst Joining the Illinois Municipal League's Board

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In 1906, the Mayors' Association was formed and it held its first annual meeting. In 1914, the name was changed to the Illinois Municipal League (IML) and a new organizational constitution was written.

The IML is an unincorporated, non-profit, nonpolitical association of Illinois' incorporated cities, villages, and towns. The members of the IML receive information and research services for the purpose of improving the functions of local governments. The Board of Directors is composed of thirty-six (36) Vice-Presidents from member communities throughout the state, and one President, Vice-President and Sergeant at Arms. All Board members are required to be elected officials.

I am humbled, proud, and honored to have been recently appointed as a Vice-President of the IML, representing Southern Illinois, at their annual meeting in Chicago during the week of September 12th. I currently serve on IML's Legislative Committee. The importance of this appointment is that our local communities and residents of Southern Illinois have a voice in legislative issues from quality of life issues, to budgets, to pensions.

Examples of important issues on IML's agenda in Springfield are:

- Reexamine language requiring arbitrators to consider the actual affordability and broader fiscal implications of their decisions and adjust that decision accordingly. At this time an arbitrator can award pay raises to individuals based solely on the fact the community can raise taxes to support the increase.

- Extend the Wireless Telephone Safety Act so citizens across the state can retain high quality 911 services.
- Municipalities across the state are hoping to enact legislation seeking protection under the Bankruptcy Code upon the affirmative vote of two thirds (2/3) of their Municipal (City) Councils.
- Approve a resolution requiring a three fifths (3/5) vote for all legislation that increases a benefit under any pension or retirement system of the State or local government. Common resolve must be addressed to resolve the pension crisis and, more appropriately, balance the interest of taxpayers and public employees.
- Approve legislation providing communities with financial assistance and statutory authority to secure vacant properties thus preventing a decrease in quality of life in neighborhoods threatened by foreclosures.
- Request that the Governor and General Assembly refrain from any budgetary action which would reduce revenues which benefit municipalities and their residents, regardless of source.

While these are just a few hot button topics, one can clearly see the need for such action in Springfield and to aid in stabilizing the budgets of municipal governments. I look forward to being an additional voice for the people of Alton and all Illinois communities in affairs affecting their ability to protect budgets, informing their representatives and senators of the public's wishes, and pursuing legislation that improves quality of life issues for the people of Illinois.