



Haine Pledges to Keep Engines of Economic Development Running

February 28 2012 2:54 PM

SPRINGFIELD, IL -- Senator Bill Haine (D-Alton) announced today his support for the renewal of state enterprise zones, an important economic development tool used by dozens of communities throughout the state that promotes and incentivizes local job creation and business expansion.

The Illinois Enterprise Zone Program began in 1983 as a way to spur economic growth and revitalize economically stagnant communities throughout Illinois. Businesses that locate their operations within an enterprise zone are eligible for certain state and local tax incentives in an effort to encourage growth. The first set of enterprise zones are set to expire next year, one of which is in East St. Louis.

"Enterprise zones have helped usher in major local investment from big companies like ConocoPhillips, U.S. Steel, Hershey, and Proctor & Gamble, providing jobs for thousands of people in the Metro East," Haine said. "We must continue to make these incentives available so that our economy grows and our citizens prosper."

"Our local businesses, both large and small, are the engines that drive our economy and we must guarantee that we provide them with the tools necessary to help foster job creation," added Haine, who in recent years has worked to win extension of area Enterprise Zones.

On Monday, a special Senate committee was formed to fine tune, extend, and expand a program that has aided employers in the creation of hundreds of thousands of jobs and spurred millions of dollars in private investment statewide. The committee will hold hearings throughout the state, gathering feedback from communities and employers in an effort to improve enterprise zones.

"Without swift action by the legislature, hundreds of businesses and entrepreneurs will no longer have access to these important economic incentives," Haine stated. "I join with my colleagues in the General Assembly in an effort to extend these incentives and keep our economic recovery moving forward."

"By guaranteeing that these economic incentives will continue to exist, we provide certainty for our local businesses and show that Illinois is a welcoming environment for both new and growing companies," Haine added.

St. Clair and Madison counties are home to seven Illinois Enterprise Zones, including Southwestern Madison County, Riverbend, the Gateway Commerce Center, East St. Louis/Washington Park, Belleville, St. Clair County Mid America, and American Bottoms.