

# **Stuart sponsors, votes to pass legislation increasing transparency in settlements for harassment-related claims**

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COLLINSVILLE – In the wake of the #MeToo and #TimesUp movements, state Rep. Katie Stuart, D-Edwardsville, is co-sponsoring legislation to hold local governments, school districts, community colleges and other local taxing districts accountable for actions concerning sexual harassment.

“It is imperative that we hold public officials at all levels of government accountable and that members of the public can see positive steps towards progress taking place,” Stuart said. “When a public employee is given a taxpayer-funded severance package amidst allegations of discrimination or harassment, taxpayers deserve transparency. This bill ensures that the public is made aware of severance packages granted as a result of allegations of sexual harassment or discrimination.”

House Bill 4242 requires local taxing bodies to provide public notice if they enter into any severance agreement with an employee or contractor who was accused of sexual harassment or sexual discrimination. The information made public would include the

name of the person receiving the severance payment, the amount, and the fact that the person receiving severance payment was accused of such harassment or discrimination. Exceptions are made in cases in which this information would lead to the identification of the complainant.

Stuart serves on the House Sexual Discrimination and Harassment Task Force.

“My constituents have the right to know how their money is being used in their communities,” continued Stuart. “House Bill 4242 is legislation that will help us fight against sexual harassment and sexual misconduct in the workplace and in our communities.”