



# Rep. Kay Sponsors Welfare Reform Proposals

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**Edwardsville, IL...** Illinois State Representative Dwight Kay (R-Glen Carbon) introduced a package of legislation designed to reduce fraud and misuse of the state's welfare system. Rep. Kay sponsored five bills to reform the State of Illinois welfare system.

"The welfare reform package introduced will eliminate the day to day fraud and misuse of an abused welfare system," said Rep. Kay. "The people who need help the most are being turned away as a result of the fraud and abuse of our welfare system. Our state simply can't afford to give cash benefits to persons misusing taxpayer funds to purchase illicit drugs, alcohol, or lottery tickets. The assistance is supposed to be used for essentials such as food, water and shelter."

The cost of welfare in Illinois continues to rise, 4.7 million Illinoisans are currently are on welfare, resulting in one-third of Illinois residents receiving state assistance. The welfare reform package focuses on reducing the fraudulent use of LINK cards (food stamps), the misuse of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (cash) benefits, and preventing criminals from receiving welfare benefits. The goal of the legislation is to save taxpayer dollars by eliminating fraud and misuse of the welfare system while preserving benefits for those who need it most.

**House Bill 133 would require photo ids on all LINK cards to ensure that the person presenting it at the checkout counter is the same person who is entitled to use it.**

The names of all secondary users will also be placed on the card. Secondary users will be required to show a valid photo id before they can use the card. **House Bill 1507 requires persons on welfare to pass a drug test in order to receive welfare benefits.**

If an applicant tests negative for substance abuse and meets all the other eligibility requirements for welfare (TANF) benefits, the cost of administering the substance abuse test to the applicant shall be deducted from the applicant's first benefits payment. Florida and Oklahoma have passed a similar law.

**House Bill 2784 enforces that cash assistance benefits are used for the basic needs that they are intended for.** TANF benefits are intended to provide financial assistance to help pay for basic needs such as food, shelter, utilities, and other necessary expenses, however under current law a person is free to spend this cash however they feel. The legislation would prevent TANF benefits from being used to purchase alcohol, lottery tickets, firearms, and other specified goods and services. **House Bill 3174 and House Bill 2490 would prevent criminals from receiving aid.** These bills would suspend public aid and benefits to inmates at State correctional facilities and recipients with outstanding warrants. “The welfare reform package if enacted would make an immediate impact by saving taxpayer funds,” said Rep. Kay. “The intent of reforming Illinois’ welfare system is to ensure our state may continue to provide assistance to individuals and families who truly need help. As we are all aware of Illinois’ financial mess, this is one step to root out wasteful and fraudulent spending of taxpayer funds.”