

Plan to eliminate East St. Louis election authority introduced by Rep. Kay

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EDWARDSVILLE - In an effort to encourage better use of local tax dollars, Illinois State Representative Dwight Kay (R-Glen Carbon) recently introduced legislation that would eliminate the East St. Louis Election Board.

House Bill 126 would abolish the East St. Louis Board of Election Commissioners 90 days after its passage. With the city of East St. Louis' population down to 27,006 as of the 2010 census from its peak in the 1950 census at 82,366, the need for the board is not what it once was. It is estimated that this legislation would save the city of East St. Louis over \$400,000 a year in operating costs. Once eliminated, election operations would become the responsibility of the St. Clair County Clerk.

"East St. Louis is struggling to pay its own bills and yet they have an election authority that saps away hundreds of thousands of dollars of much needed funds," said Rep. Kay.

"The \$400,000 this is expected to save could be used to hire more police or be used in community renewal programs."

There have also been serious concerns over alleged election fraud that has dogged the board for years.

"I believe free and fair elections are the backbone of our democracy," said Rep. Kay. "If we can put the minds of voters at ease, we should certainly make every effort to do so."