

Rep. Elik's January 2023 Legislative Update

by Chris Guy

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ALTON - This is my thirteenth update to the citizens of the 111th district, as your State Representative. Happy New Year to all, I hope you had a happy and healthy Thanksgiving and Christmas season. I enjoyed spending time with my family over the holidays after a very busy 2022. I appreciate your kindness, prayers, and concern for me and my family during my first term and I am honored to serve you again for the next two years in the 103rd General Assembly.

After the General Election on November 8th, the General Assembly went back to Springfield for the fall veto session. House Republicans met during veto session and elected Representative Tony McCombie from Savanna, Illinois to become our next caucus leader when the new General Assembly convenes on January 11, 2023. Representative McCombie will be the first female leader of either House caucus. She knows the Metro East well and she will be an excellent House Republican leader. Democrat Representative Chris Welch will again be the House Speaker.

During the veto session, the legislature passed another trailer bill to the SAFE-T Act. The lawsuit against the SAFE-T Act, focused mainly on the no-cash bail provisions, was heard in Kankakee County court on December 20th. The judge ruled on December 28th that the no-cash bail provisions violated the Illinois Constitution, and that those provisions would not go into effect on January 1, 2023 but only in those counties that were parties to the lawsuit (including Madison and Jersey counties). Late afternoon on December 31st, the Illinois Supreme Court stopped the implementation of the no-cash bail provisions statewide, until it could hear the appeal which the Illinois Attorney General had filed. The Supreme Court has promised an expedited review of the Kankakee county judge's opinion. This bill was passed in the prior lame duck session in January 2021, just hours before I took office. It has been an ongoing issue of concern and for public safety officials and citizens throughout Illinois all through my first term. Here we are at the end of my first term, and we will finally soon have an answer as to whether this law is constitutional or not.

We return to Springfield for the "lame duck" session, from January 4th-7th, and again on January 10th. The Governor and other constitutional officers are sworn into their offices on January 9th. The General Assembly is sworn in on January 11th.

I'm carefully watching the activity on House Bill 5855, which is known as the "assault weapons ban". This bill will remove the option for eighteen- to twenty-year-olds to get a Firearm Owners ID card; makes it unlawful to manufacture, deliver, sell, or purchase a variety of firearms, attachments, and magazines. Three hundred days after the effective date of the Act, it will be unlawful to possess any of the specified firearms and magazines unless they have been reported and registered with the State Police. The list of firearms is long, and includes many commonly owned semi-automatic firearms. The House Judiciary-Criminal committee has held three hearings on this bill. Gun rights organizations have promised immediate legal action on the bill if it should pass, because of recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions casting strong doubt that this bill is constitutional. My expectation is that prior to the end of the lame duck session the bill will be changed somewhat to entice the support of moderate Democrats in the House and Senate, to get enough votes for it to pass. The bill number may change as well, and may start in the Senate instead of the House where it is now. The bill will move quickly

once the Democrat sponsor knows he has the votes to pass it. The bill needs sixty votes in the House, and thirty in the Senate, to pass. If it does not pass during the lame duck session, all bills die, and have to be reintroduced in the 103rd General Assembly after January 11th. I oppose this bill's attempts to punish law-abiding gun owners who are afforded rights under the Second Amendment.

I was so pleased to receive the Jim Guilinger Legislative Award from the Illinois Leadership Council for Agricultural Education, for my support for ag education in Illinois schools. Illinois' economy depends on agriculture and we must be a leader in educating our own students for the opportunities in the ag industry of the future.

Finally, I want to thank everyone who donated to my food drive to benefit Crisis Food Center of Alton. We delivered two carloads of non-perishable foods to the center just before Christmas. I was glad to coordinate this help to our fellow community members who visit the center for their food needs.

If we can help you navigate state government, please contact my state office at 618-433-8046 or visit my website at RepElik.com.

State Representative Amy Elik, 111th District