Hoffman Metal Theft Legislation Clears the House

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BELLEVILLE – Legislation sponsored by State Rep. Jay Hoffman, D-Swansea, that will bring together a group of experts to combat the copper theft problem in the Metro East and throughout Illinois cleared the House and now moves to the Senate.

"I am encouraged that we are one step closer to addressing this very real problem that has indiscriminately targeted and damaged the property of local residents and businesses," Hoffman said. "There are many law enforcement officials and local residents with great ideas about how to stop copper theft crime, so I want to bring their expertise together for the best outcomes."

Hoffman crafted House Bill 330 to draw on the knowledge and creativity of law enforcement and industry professionals who experience all sides of the devastation of copper theft crime. As criminals can get more money for selling copper, incidents of copper theft from homes, businesses, telephone lines, power stations, air conditioning units, abandoned properties and construction sites have increased. Not only incurring thousands of dollars in property damage, each theft can put public utilities, families and employees in danger.

Hoffman began working on this measure a few years ago, and has now won the approval of the Illinois House of Representatives. He is pushing for passage in the Senate. If signed into law, a collaboration of legislators, state and local law enforcement, and representatives from Illinois public utilities, rural electric cooperatives, insurance companies and scrap metal suppliers would join forces to deter metal theft and strengthen existing laws.

"Since this problem is not going to go away on its own, we need to come together to find an effective long-term solution before more danger is done," Hoffman said. "I urge the Senate to pass this legislation so we can tackle the copper theft issue head on."

Hoffman represents Illinois' 113th Representative District, which includes all or portions of Belleville, Brooklyn, Caseyville, Fairmont City, Fairview Heights, Granite City, Madison, Shiloh, Swansea, Venice and Washington Park.