



# Hoffman Legislation supports burn victims

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**SPRINGFIELD** – Legislation sponsored by state Rep. Jay Hoffman, D-Swansea, would cut the red tape of disability benefits and allow fatally wounded burn victims to receive immediate relief.

“When someone suffers traumatic burn injuries, they should not have to wait months to receive help with the high costs of medical care,” Hoffman said. “After working with the family of the late George Bailey, I want to ensure that families do not have to go through the same painstaking process of waiting months for reimbursements.”

Hoffman’s Burn Victims Relief Act creates the George Bailey Memorial Program to fund medical costs for victims that suffer fatal burn injuries, so their families would not have to suffer the financial burden of paying for medical expenses before Social Security benefits kick in. This legislation would eliminate the current mandatory five month waiting period before disability payments are available, allowing payments to be made immediately in extreme cases involving burn victims that have less than 18 months to live.

Hoffman began crafting this legislation after working with the family of George Bailey, who succumbed to his injuries two months after an explosion at the Granite City Steel Plant in 2004. As a result of the accident, Bailey’s family reported that his medical expenses added up to over \$1 million.

“From a personal note, we watched our cousin’s family suffer for two months with no help, while another burn victim’s family lost everything- including their home as a result of funds not coming in,” Janie Bailey, cousin of the late George Bailey, said. “We don’t want this to happen to any other families, so we hope this program will help all the families that need it.”