Government Relations

IACBMC represents the collective interest of counties before the Illinois General Assembly. Legislative policy is set by our members and reflected in the official issues platform which is revised annually.

IACBMC supports legislation which will materially assist counties in their daily operations and opposes bills which would seriously hinder their abilities to govern themselves or that mandate additional costs.
SENATE BILLS
New Public Acts
SB 43 (P.A. 97-0353) – Tax Disclosure Act
Creates the Taxation Disclosure Act. Provides that the Department of Revenue shall make publicly available an online searchable database of tax rates. The database will allow citizens and businesses to search for tax rates by zip code or address as well as by clicking through a map of the State. Requires that tax rate calculators be provided on the database. Requires every tax district in the State, including local governments, to report its tax rates annually to the Department.

SB 541 (P.A. 97-0084) – County Oversight of Agencies
Provides that a county board in a county with a population greater than 300,000 but less than 2,000,000 may by ordinance require certain units of local government and agencies to provide the county with detailed financial information, including finances, budget, contracts, and ethics policies.
SB 1253 (P.A. 97-0460) – County Officer Education Office
Allows a county board member in a county having fewer than 40,000 inhabitants, during the term of office for which he or she is elected, to also hold the office of member of the board of a community college district.

SB 1584 (P.A. 97-0439) – Mental Health Advisory Committee
In any county except Cook that has a county health department but no mental health program, the county board chairman may appoint a seven member mental health advisory committee by the end of 2011.

SB 1697 (Passed Both Houses) – State’s Attorneys Fees
Implements a $2 fee on defendants to go to state’s attorneys to pay for automated record keeping systems.
SB 1686 (P.A. 97-0146) – Public Funds Statement Publication
Makes changes regarding the publishing requirements for units of local government. Requires published assessment notices to include certain statements and limits the publication fee paid to newspapers for publishing assessment lists to $.80 per parcel. Sets other legal advertising rates. Provides that certain notices must be published only once.

SB 1831 (P.A. 97-0609) – IMRF Compensation
Makes several changes to the definition of final rate of earnings and return to work rules. Expands the period applicable for the 125% rule. Suspends the pension of a retired member who returns to work as an independent contractor with the same entity from which he or she retired. Terminates the provision allowing SLEP participants to upgrade non-SLEP service to the SLEP formula for new members and sunsets the ECO program.
SB 1907 (P.A. 97-0611) – Cook County Road District Abolition
The trustees of any Cook County township may call a referendum on abolishing its road district. If it passes, the township will assume all of the road district’s powers and duties, including taxation. The township may contract with Cook County, a municipality, or a private firm to administer its roads.

SB 2170 (P.A. 97-0542) – School Facility Occupation Tax
Changes the School Facility Occupation Tax Law which allows counties to impose a sales tax with receipts earmarked for school construction. It requires imposition of the sales tax if the voters approve the referendum (instead of allowing the county board to choose to impose the sales tax) and requires the tax rate to be set forth in the question instead of allowing the county board to choose to impose the tax at a different rate).
SENATE BILLS
Defeated or Pending
SB 173 (Defeated 14-30-2) – Local Government Consolidation
Establishes the Local Government Consolidation Commission to create a recommended list of local governments to be abolished or consolidated. General Assembly would have 60 days to vote “no” on the recommendations or they automatically become law.

SB 1227 – Mobile Home Conveyance
Creates a method of permitting an owner to convey or voluntarily encumber a manufactured home as real property.

SB 1811 – Township Road Districts
Would have eliminated any township road district with less than 100 miles of highway throughout the State. A modified version of the bill, Senate Bill 958, would have set the threshold for abolition at 32 miles in counties with a population over 500,000. Neither bill passed committee.
SB 1732 / SB 1733 – Local Government Fee Limits & Penalties
Provides that a county may not impose a fee for a permit in excess of the fees provided for in the Illinois Vehicle Code and that a county may not impose a civil penalty in excess of the penalty specified in the Code.

SB 2194 – Sales Tax Local Sourcing
Specifies that with respect to sales taxes imposed by the State and units of local government, sales are attributed to the local government where the purchase order is accepted, subject to certain exceptions.

SB 2515 – Cemetery Laws
Makes several oversight act changes to alleviate concerns of rural cemetery operators as a result of legislation passed last year after a Cook County cemetery scandal.
HOUSE BILLS
New Public Acts
HB 156 (P.A. 97-0242) Telecommunication Notice
Requires telecommunications facilities to give county board members 30 days notice before a permit is issued for the construction of a new telecommunications tower.

HB 268 (P.A. 97-0316) – Local Govt. Consolidation Commission Act
Establishes a commission of legislative members and local government representatives to report to the General Assembly on consolidating local governments. It is strictly advisory in nature.

HB 806 (P.A. 97-0551) – Wastewater Sludge
Establishes stricter limits on the storage and application of wastewater sludge on agricultural land. Requires written notice to county officials within whose jurisdiction the land lies before application of the sludge.
HB 1218 (P.A. 97-0557) – Tax Sale Auctions

This bill completely overhauls the county “property tax sale” auctions.

• Beginning January 1, 2013, counties with a population of over 10,000, the Treasurer shall begin an automated bidding system programmed to accept the lowest price bid by a tax purchaser for all tax sales.
• Beginning January 1, 2013, counties with a population less than 10,000, the Treasurer shall begin an automated bidding system programmed to accept the lowest price bid by a tax purchaser or video tape with audio for all tax sales.
• Requires a 30 day notice of a property tax sale, the posting will include the street address and PIN number for each delinquent property.
• Creates a tax sale “online database” which requires the treasurer to post 10 days prior to the tax sale, including the street address and PIN number for each delinquent.
HB 1487 (P.A. 97-0265) – Renewable Energy District
Creates the Renewable Energy Production District Act, which allows county boards to establish renewable energy districts or wind farm districts. Under the new law, such a district would receive approval through a voter referendum.

HB 1491 (P.A. 97-0250) – County Liquor Ordinance
A county may provide by ordinance that alcoholic liquor may be sold or delivered in any building belonging to or under the control of the county or in any building located on land under the control of the county.

HB 1526 (P.A. 97-0404) – Municipal Annexation
Clarifies that municipalities may pre-annex land 1.5 miles beyond their jurisdiction but may not go beyond that distance.
HB 1698 (P.A. 97-0018) – Worker’s Compensation
Reforms the state's workers compensation system. Establishes medical networks for workers comp claims, reduces the benefit period for carpal tunnel syndrome injuries from 40 weeks to 28 weeks, and shifts the burden of proof from employers to workers to show whether alcohol or drug use was a factor in a workplace accident, for which comp would be denied.

HB 1716 (P.A. 97-0579) – Freedom of Information Act
Allows public bodies to take up to 21 days to respond to FOIA requests by people who have filed more than 50 requests to the same public body, more than 15 requests in a month and more than 7 requests in a week. Does not apply to the news media, non-profit or academic organizations. Also allows a public body to charge a commercial requester up to $10 per hour for any time spent beyond 8 hours searching for a requested record.
HB 2101 (P.A. 97-0129) – County Investments
Gives counties greater latitude on how they invest money. Specifically, it allows counties to purchase CDs and deposit funds with Illinois credit unions, something until now that has been impermissible under state law. Brings counties in line with authority already given to municipalities.

HB 2550 (P.A. 97-0330) – County Ordinances
Provides that township enforcement officers are authorized to enforce county ordinances within areas of a county located within the township pursuant to intergovernmental agreements.

HB 2554 (P.A. 97-0379) – Auxiliary Deputies
Provides that auxiliary deputies may receive compensation as is set by the County Board "with the advice and consent of the Sheriff".
HB 2590 (P.A. 97-0380) – Jail Privatization Ban
Sheriffs and units of local government are prohibited from contracting for services to prisoners except “ancillary” services (including medical and educational, repair and maintenance, and other services not directly related to jail ownership, management, or operations of security services).

HB 3184 (P.A. 97-0004) – Civil Union Fees
Lets county boards determine fees for civil union or marriage licenses that are not to exceed $75, while directing $5 from each of the fees to the Illinois Domestic Violence Fund.

HB 3253 (P.A. 97-0272) – IMRF SLEP
Terminates the provision allowing SLEP participants to upgrade non-SLEP service to the SLEP formula and closes the ECO program.
HOUSE BILLS
Lost or Pending
HB 222 – CMS Accountability Portal
Establishes the Illinois Transparency and Accountability Portal to include a searchable database of all county, township, and municipal employees sorted by employing unit, position, title, and pay rates.

HB 230 – Wind Farm Regulation
Provides that a county may not limit the height of a distributed wind energy generation device on a parcel of land zoned for agricultural, industrial or commercial purposes.

HB 267 (Lost 18-32) – County Tax Increase Opt-Out
Provides that Cook and collar counties may opt out of the .25% tax increase imposed under House Bill 656 passed in the 95th General Assembly to fund mass transit.
HB 1404 – County Board Other Office
Provides that no member of a county board may be appointed to, accept, or hold any office unless he or she first resigns from the office of county board member prior to taking the oath of office to another office.

HB 2557 – County Unit Road District
Provides that a county unit road district may be eliminated by the same mechanism used to form the district. The county board would determine what road district to adopt in place of the eliminated district.

HB 3372 – Stormwater Management
Allow counties to establish systems for the use of green infrastructure and to adopt a schedule of fees, after referendum, to provide a dedicated revenue source to pay for ongoing stormwater management services.
VETO SESSION

Actions
SB 1865 – Joint Insurance Pools
Prohibits a joint insurance pool or other intergovernmental cooperative from requiring a public agency member to provide notice of intent to withdraw from the program more than 30 days before the date upon which the member withdraws. **Status: Remains in Senate**

SB 2147 (P.A. 97-0619) – Regional Superintendents Salaries
Allows for regional superintendents to be paid for one year, including back pay from the time they have worked without compensation, out of Corporate Personal Property Replacement Tax fund. Also calls for the creation of a task force that would make recommendations on potential consolidation of the Regional Offices of Education, which are run by the superintendents. **Note:** IACBMC has serious concerns that the state will increasingly look to cost shift its financial obligations onto local governments.
HB 1293 – Mortgage Foreclosure Sales
Gives banks and sellers of Illinois foreclosures for sale the option to have their properties sold by private companies. Currently, the county sheriff takes care of foreclosure sales in the state. Having the sheriff involved, as opposed to private companies, provides more oversight and accountability. If this bill becomes law, counties would lose the fees that are currently collected for conducting foreclosure sales. **Status: House Concurrence**

HB 3793 (Defeated 34-73-5) – PTELL Extension Limitation
This bill sought to amend the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law to prevent any subject taxing body whose total assessed value decreases from the previous year, excluding new construction, from collecting an increase. It would essentially set that district’s tax cap to zero percent, unless the voters decide in a referendum to approve an increase.
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