

## **Legislative Director Report: North Cook County/Lake County** Gerri Songer – *September 2018*

### **Tuesday September 4, 2018**

Attended *Vernon Hills Rally with JB Pritzker* in Vernon Hills hosted by The Lake County Democratic Central Committee, Lake County Democratic Women, and Others. Spoke with IL Sen. Melinda Bush; Candidate for Lake County Treasurer, Holly Kim; Candidate for Lake County Board - District 18, Julie Simpson; and former Lake County Coroner, Tom Rudd.

### **Tuesday September 4, 2018**

Attended *Tri-County Access Project Public Open House Meeting* in Kildeer. This project is a comprehensive regional study that will determine how to ease traffic congestion in Lake, northern Cook and eastern McHenry counties. Information and updates about the Tri-County Access Project, including all materials presented at the open house meeting can be viewed online at [tricountyaccess.org](http://tricountyaccess.org). Comments and questions about the project can be shared at any time via the project website or by email at [info@tricountyaccess.org](mailto:info@tricountyaccess.org).

Comments received by October 1, 2018, become part of the official meeting summary and will be considered as part of the Environmental Impact Statement scoping process. Scoping is designed to identify the issues to be addressed as part of the Tri-County Access Project Environmental Impact Statement.

### **Saturday September 8, 2018**

Attended *Marty Moylan's Campaign Kickoff* in Des Plaines. Spoke with IL Rep. Marty Moylan and IL Sen. Laura Murphy.

### **Saturday September 15, 2018**

Attended *The State of the State: Civics in Illinois* at the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn. This event was hosted by *Citizen Advocacy Center* to address the question, "*How is civics education being implemented in Illinois public schools?*" Dr. Shawn Healy outlined how the Robert R. McCormick Foundation and others have made this legislation alive through a three-year implementation process.

In 2015, [HB 4025](#) (Public Act 99-0434 - [www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=099-0434](http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=099-0434)) was signed into law, requiring that Illinois high school students complete a [stand-alone, semester-long](#) civics course. The law goes on to say that civics "shall help young people acquire and learn to use the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will prepare them to be competent and responsible citizens throughout their lives. Civics course content must include instruction on *government institutions*, the *discussion of current and controversial issues*, *service learning*, and *simulations of democratic processes*. School districts may utilize [private funding](#) available for the purposes of offering civics education."

A separate law (Public Act 099-0485 - <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=099-0485>) was passed by the Illinois General Assembly and signed by Governor Rauner provides

further clarity on HB 4025's effective date. The course mandate takes effect on [July 1, 2016](#), and applies to incoming freshmen for the 2016-17 school year.

[IllinoisCivics.org](#) is a civics education resource site. For additional information on the new law, please see the ISBE's updated (February 2016) *Guidance Document for State Graduation Requirements* ([https://www.isbe.net/Documents/grad\\_require.pdf](https://www.isbe.net/Documents/grad_require.pdf)).

### **Saturday September 15, 2018**

Attended *Citizen Advocacy Center's 25th Anniversary Planning Meeting* in Elmhurst. CAC will be hosting a gala at the Carlisle in Oak Brook on March 23, 2019.

CAC is an award winning, non-profit, non-partisan free community legal organization. It operates through the use of community lawyers who protect the public's assets and promote meaningful participation in the democratic process. As an institution comprised of community lawyers, CAC engages in a holistic approach to building democracy through community organizing, coalition building, legal advocacy, civic education, and litigation to make government more accountable, accessible, and transparent.

Details to come.

### **ENGAGE. A Civic Engagement Initiative**

A Civic Engagement Initiative will be implemented in two District 214 schools, Elk Gove (Oct. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018) and Wheeling (Oct. 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018) high schools. I've reached out to all Democratic and Republican candidates/elected officials in the Elk Grove, Des Plaines, and Wheeling voting areas regarding this event.

Some of these candidates include (*I'm still in the process of confirming candidates*):

#### **EGHS**

US Sen. Dick Durbin (D), US Sen. Tammy Duckworth (D), US Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi (D), Candidate Jitendra Diganvker (R), US Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D), Candidate John Elleson (R), Candidate Ann Gillespie (D), IL Sen. Tom Rooney (R), IL Sen. Laura Murphy (D), IL Rep. Marty Moylan (D), Candidate Marilyn Smolenski (R), Candidate Kevin Morrison (D), Candidate Abdelnasser Rashid (D), Mayor Craig B. Johnson

#### **WHS**

IL Sen. Julie Morrison (D), Candidate Barrett Davie (R), IL Sen. Terry Link (D), Candidate Daniel Didech (D), Candidate Adam R. Didech (D)

I've been working with D214 Community Education; Citizen Advocacy Center; League of Women Voters; and Jim Slusher, Managing Editor of the Daily Herald.

Information regarding this initiative is available at [engage-today.com](http://engage-today.com), along with related events, candidate information, voting information, and other teacher/student research tools and resources.

I hope to expand this initiative to include more schools in future years.