

Legislative Director Report: North Cook County/Lake County

Gerri Songer – *March-May 2020*

Saturday February 28, 2020

Attended *Legislative Breakfast* in Hoffman Estates. Assisted *Senator Cristina Castro* and *Representative Anna Moeller*. Other elected officials attending included: Sen. Murphy and Rep. Mussman, Sen. Gillespie and Rep. Walker, Rep. Crespo and Rep. Morrison, and Rep. Pappas.

Keynote speakers included US Representative Raja Krishnamoorthi and Illinois Federation of Teachers President Dan Montgomery. Hot topics included TIFs, Mandates such as the Driver Education Waiver and expanding Career Technical Education, and Pensions.

Thursday, April 23, 2020

Attended Local 1211 Zoom Meeting. There was nothing new to report. Committees were postponed in Springfield due to the pandemic, so legislation wasn't moving.

Thursday, May 14, 2020

Committees are still postponed in Springfield. Spoke with Marty McAlpin, Chief of Staff for *Senator Laura Murphy*, via email. He invited our members to participate in a telephone town hall hosted by the Senator this evening. He noted that the event may be an avenue for our members to address any questions they may have.

Members can join the live telephone town hall meeting by dialing [855 -269-4484](tel:855-269-4484) at **6:30 PM** tonight.

Other elected officials are also hosting town hall meetings and 'drive-through' events. To find information regarding these events, members should visit the websites of their elected officials where event information is generally posted.

Other sources of event information for members living in North Cook County and Lake County include:

- tenthdems.org/events/
- sixthdems.com/6th-dems-news

TRS "Buyout" Programs Exceed Expectations

Interest in the state's two pension "buyout" programs has proved to be so strong that officials must increase the amount of money appropriated to meet all lump-sum payments. In all, participating TRS members have requested \$269M in buyout funds, which is \$56M more than what state government originally had allocated to TRS for the programs.

The Governor's Office of Management and Budget is planning to allocate additional money to TRS – enough for the remaining payments in fiscal year 2020 and for anticipated payments in FY 2021.

At the end of the first year of "buyouts," 17.4% of retiring TRS members participated in the "Accelerated Automatic Increase" program.