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Legislative Update Week of May 11, 2015

This document highlights bills of interest to DuPage County Government that are still moving through the legislative process. To view the actual text of bills, consult the General Assembly's website at www.ilga.gov or contact the County Board office for additional information.

Support:

HB 228 - Moratorium on New Governments (Franks, D-Woodstock/Connelly, R-Lisle): Provides that until 4 years after the effective date of the amendatory Act, the General Assembly shall not enact any law creating any new unit of local government, including, but not limited to, the division of existing units of local government. Provides that the amendatory Act does not apply to the creation of a new unit of local government from the consolidation of 2 or more pre-existing units of local government.
Status: The bill was adopted by the House by a vote of 111-2-0 and is on the Order of Second Reading in the Senate.

HB 229 – Expansion of DuPage County Govt. Efficiency Model (Franks, D-Woodstock/Althoff, R-McHenry): After six amendments and a spirited debate, legislation was adopted by the House that expands the Local Government Reduction & Efficiency Act enacted in 2013 to permit DuPage County to initiate a transparent and lengthy process to dissolve a small number of county appointed agencies to the counties of Lake and McHenry. This successful model requires the adoption of two county board ordinances, three audits, a 150 waiting period for citizens to object among a number of other provisions. Represents a first step towards allowing local elected officials to work collaboratively to determine if public services can be delivered in a more cost effective manner.
Status: The bill was adopted by the House by a vote of 61-40-4 and is before the Senate Executive Committee.

HB 1455 - Electronic Products Recycling (McAsey, D-Romeoville/Althoff, R-McHenry): Addresses the current shortage of vendors willing to accept (residential) recycled electronics by increasing the manufacturers goals over the next three years; establishes a registration and accreditation process for recyclers and refurbishing facilities; and establishes penalties for non-compliance **(A joint priority of Cook & the Collar Counties)**
Status: The bill was adopted by the House by a vote of 114-0 and is on the Order of Second Reading in the Senate.

(Support Continued):

HB 3747 – Dissolution of DuPage Fair & Exposition Authority (Breen, R-Lombard/Connelly, R-Lisle): A DuPage County initiative (with the support of the DuPage County Fair Association and the Fair & Exposition Authority), the bill requires that within 30 days of the effective date of this amendatory Act, that the duplicative DuPage Fair & Exposition Authority be dissolved and all remaining funds be transferred to the DuPage County Fair Association.
Status: The bill was adopted by the House by a vote of 105-0 and is on the Order of Second Reading in the Senate.

SB 59 – Juror Compensation (Mulroe, D-Chicago): Provides that if the county board determines it cannot pay jurors the increased sums of $25 for the first day and $50 for each subsequent day of attendance (per Public Act 98-1132), then the county board shall fix an amount no less than $4 for each day of necessary attendance in counties of the first class, the sum of $5 for each day in counties of the second class (includes DuPage), and the sum of $10 for each day in counties of the third class.
Status: The bill is on the Order of Second Reading in the Senate (deadline for consideration was extended to May 15).

SB 636 - Increase O'Hare Runway Cap (Mulroe, D-Chicago/Currie, D-Chicago): Amends the Illinois Aeronautics Act to provide that a certificate of approval shall be required for construction of a new runway at O'Hare International Airport that would result in more than 10 (rather than 8) runways being available for aircraft operations.
Status: The bill was adopted by the Senate by a vote of 52-0 and is before the House Transportation, Vehicles & Safety Committee.

SB 637 – Operation of Runways (Mulroe, D-Chicago/Currie, D-Chicago): Amends the Illinois Aeronautics Act to provide that the decommission, alteration, destruction, or re-designation of diagonal runways 14R/32L, 14L/32R, 4L/22R, and 4R/22L at O'Hare International Airport is prohibited by any municipality or other political subdivision, or officer or employee of any municipality or other political subdivision. Requires all runways to be maintained and used in a safe and equitable manner for the purpose of fairly distributing air traffic over city and suburban communities.
Status: The bill was adopted by the Senate by a vote of 52-0 and is before the House Transportation, Vehicles & Safety Committee.

SB 727 – Expanded participation in Drug Courts (Stadelman, D-Rockford): Amends the Drug Court Treatment Act to eliminate the provision that excludes a defendant from a drug court program if the defendant has previously completed or has been discharged from a drug court program. **(A joint priority of Cook & the Collar Counties)**
Status: The bill is on the Order of Third Reading in the Senate.

(Support Continued):

SB 804 – Increase/Court Services Fee (Haine, D-Alton/Moffitt, R-Galesburg): Authorizes counties (permissive), per an acceptable cost study, to increase the current $25 court services fee that helps defray the cost of court security expenditures. **(A joint priority of Cook & the Collar Counties)**
Status: The bill was adopted by the Senate by a vote of 32-17 and is on the Order of Second Reading in the House.

SB 1747 – Frivolous Lawsuits (Mulroe, D-Chicago/Cassidy, D-Chicago): Amends the County Jail Good Behavior Allowance Act to provide that if a lawsuit is filed by a person confined in a county jail, whether serving a term of imprisonment or confined pending trial or sentencing, against the sheriff or county, or against any of their officers or employees, and the court makes a specific finding that a pleading, motion, or other paper filed by the prisoner is frivolous, the warden may revoke up to 90 days of good behavior allowance under the Act. Provides that if the person has not accumulated 90 days of good behavior allowance at the time of the finding, then the warden may revoke all of the good behavior allowance accumulated by the prisoner. Defines "frivolous" and "lawsuit."
Status: The bill was adopted by the Senate by a vote of 46-1-2 and is before the House Judiciary Committee.

HJR 65 – Government Efficiency Resolution (Sandack, R-Downers Grove): A DuPage County and Transform Illinois Initiative, the resolution acknowledges that the current size, scope and cost of local government in Illinois may overburden taxpayers, negatively impact our economy, discourage civic engagement, reduce transparency, and impair the efficient delivery of public services. Supports efforts: (i) to examine the existing landscape of local and State government to determine how more effective and efficient models can be developed; (ii) to improve the quality, cost, and accountability of government services at all levels through cooperation, collaboration, partnerships, shared services, and, if appropriate, through the consolidation or elimination of government agencies; and (iii) to eliminate the duplication of services and to enact measures that will streamline government operations across the State.
Status: The resolution is assigned to the House Rules Committee.

Wireless Surcharge Extension: The 9-1-1 wireless surcharge that funds the majority of the county's response to 9-1-1 calls placed is set to expire as of July 1. The DuPage County Emergency Telephone System Board (ETSB) is the single largest system in the state and absent these funds, dispatch and other services required to ensure a swift and appropriate public safety response to citizen requests for emergency assistance would be in jeopardy. DuPage County supports the draft recommendations recently issued by the 9-1-1 Services Advisory Board to: implement a statewide Next Generation 9-1-1 Network within 5 years; require the consolidation of smaller PSAPs (Public Safety Answering Points); create a statewide monthly surcharge in the amount of 87 cents per connection for each wireline, postpaid wireless, VoIP and cable provided telecommunications services along with a 3% surcharge on prepaid wireless sales; continue to require 9-1-1 systems to provide financial audits to the ICC listing expenditures made from surcharge revenues to ensure transparency and compliance with the law; and continue ICC regulatory oversight of 9-1-1 systems and establish a permanent Statewide 9-1-1 Advisory Board within the ICC . **(A joint priority of Cook and the Collar Counties)**

Oppose:

HB 2462 – Electronic Monitoring Nursing Homes (Harris, D-Chicago/Link, D-Waukegan): Creates the Authorized Electronic Monitoring in Long-Term Care Facilities Act to permit under certain conditions, a resident of a facility licensed under the ID/DD Community Care Act or the Nursing Home Care Act, to use an audio or video surveillance system in his or her room at his or her own expense. Raises a number of concerns for the DuPage Convalescent Center including the privacy of residents, the use, storage and access to recordings, rights of employees to be recorded and potential (negative) impact on caregiver relationship with residents, liability concerns, among other items.
Status: The bill was adopted by the House by a vote of 85-24-3 and is before the Senate Committee on Public Health.

SB 1602 - Electronic Monitoring of Licensed Residential Facilities (Clayborne, D-East St. Louis): Creates the Electronic Monitoring Act to require all state licensed residential facilities to have a written policy regarding the use of electronic monitoring devices. Permits electronic monitoring of a resident's room under certain conditions. Raises a number of concerns as to the impact on the County's Convalescent Center.
Status: The bill is on the Order of Third Reading in the Senate (deadline for consideration was extended until May 15).

Monitor:

HB 3620 – Court Interpreters/Civil Cases (Soto, D-Chicago/Martinez, D-Chicago): Requires courts to provide for the cost of interpreters in civil cases. DuPage County currently employs 3 in-house Spanish interpreters who are utilized largely for criminal cases and 4 part-time Spanish interpreters at the four traffic court rooms/locations. Recently, the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts started to reimburse some of the costs associated with interpreter services and the Illinois Supreme Court has asked the circuit courts to develop plans to offer interpreter services in all matters.
Status: The bill was adopted by the House by a vote of 101-6 and is before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

SB 1879 – Illinois Energy Plan (Lightford, D-Westchester): The comprehensive bill initiated by ComEd, seeks to strengthen the security and reliability of the company's grid, expand energy efficiency programs, and community solar projects among other items. Provides a $300 million investment for the construction of six microgrids including a location on the DuPage County Complex (campus) to reinforce reliability and resiliency during extreme weather conditions or other events.
Status: The bill is on the Order of Third Reading in the Senate (the deadline for consideration was extended until May 15).

Appropriations:

Local Government Distributive Formula (LGDF): The Governor's proposed 50% reduction of LGDF monies received by counties and municipalities, from 8% to 4% of income tax proceeds for FY 2016, would result in a cut of $4.87 million (annually) to DuPage County. Monies allocated to the county under LGDF represent only a small portion of what DuPage County taxpayers send to Springfield in income taxes paid. These revenues support basic county services our residents depend upon including the operation of the county nursing home, mental health care, senior citizen programs, public safety and many other core county government services. Recognizing the state's financial position, County Leaders ask that the General Assembly work to minimize the impact of such cuts by repealing a number of unfunded mandates placed on local governments and by providing greater local authority.

DuPage Convalescent Center – Medicaid Budget: The DuPage Convalescent Center (county nursing home) provides care to over 300 of our most vulnerable residents. Approximately 80% of the center's patient days are covered by the state's Medicaid program. In order to balance the state's FY 2015 budget, the center received a rate cut of 12.6% for the remaining three months of the state fiscal year. Additional cuts in state Fiscal Year 2016 would have a devastating impact on the quality of care and level of operations provided at the center.

Capital Program: DuPage County is responsible for a large portion of the county's infrastructure including: the provision of water and sewer services to approximately 200,000 county residents; the operation and maintenance of countywide flood control facilities including sixteen reservoirs/dams and pumping stations; the operation of a number of facilities on the county's main campus in Wheaton including the county jail, courthouse, health department, animal shelter and county nursing home; plus the maintenance of 220 miles of highways and 92 miles of multi-use trails.

DuPage County has developed a list of (60) flood control, transportation, wastewater, water and other critical infrastructure projects that once completed, would significantly reduce flooding for hundreds of homeowners and businesses, relieve traffic congestion, improve water quality and enhance public safety for the county's 932,126 residents. To review the county's 2015 capital program, please visit our website: www.dupagecapitalplan.com