

**July 11, 2009**

**Finally, economic stimulus for the State of Illinois, implications for the 38<sup>th</sup> District, thoughts about the FY2010 budget negotiations, and Jazz in the Park for Charity 2 week countdown.**

**Capital bill signing and implications for the 38<sup>th</sup> District**

On Friday, July 10<sup>th</sup> I received a late morning call from Governor Quinn's office inviting me to the Governor's signing of the capital construction bill. I will be attending the press conference for this all important bill on Monday, July 13<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 noon. It will be at Marshall High School, on the West side of Chicago. This development is one of the most welcomed actions in the 96<sup>th</sup> General Assembly so far. Quinn's signing of the capital bill will mark the start of economic recovery with funds generated within the State. Heretofore, Quinn's non-signing of the bill had been a strategy to get Republican legislators to sign on to a tax increase for the operating budget. Though we should all support education, the social safety net and healthcare, this ploy did not influence any of the Republicans in the House. At a meeting last Monday at the Thompson Center (that many of you said you saw me sitting next to the Governor), I told the Governor that he should sign the capital bill. I informed him that the aforementioned ploy unfortunately was not working. In addition, many of my communities could not start needed infrastructure projects. I also told him that other Southland communities not as fortunate as some of ours were suffering to a greater degree. They were not experiencing the infusion of capital monies and subsequent jobs that would be generated in their local economies. His words to me were, "Al, stay tuned."

Approximately \$75 million of 38<sup>th</sup> District road projects will commence on the basis of federal stimulus and capital bill money through IDOT. Of the \$75 million, \$35 million is going to a very important project in the northern part of my district (Harvey and Markham). That is the total reconstruction of 159<sup>th</sup> street from the I-294 Tollway to Halsted. This is important because 159<sup>th</sup> Street is a major east-west thoroughfare in our area. Major commerce is reliant on this road and I have always said that we could not think about economic development in our area if we did not have strong infrastructure investments. Virtually all of the other 38<sup>th</sup> District communities will share in part of the remaining \$40 million in road resurfacing and repair.

In addition, I have \$1.6 million of "local capital initiative" money. I have apportioned these monies to local governments within the 38<sup>th</sup> district on the basis the percentage of my legislative jurisdiction of that municipality and other factors. For example, a town such as Matteson with whom I represent 100% of that jurisdiction stands to receive "a full share" of the total for municipalities, which would be approximately \$200,000. I have designated that these local capital initiatives be used for the purposes of "water, sewer, facilities or related infrastructure projects". That definition is narrow enough to indicate that these monies are not for administrative projects. At the same time, the definition is broad enough to include most infrastructure projects that one could conceive.

With regard to project funding of a wider regional nature, my south suburban legislative colleagues and myself fought hard and succeeded in bringing hundreds of millions of dollars to the region. This includes \$100 million for land acquisition for the South Suburban Airport; deferred maintenance and remodeling monies to colleges in the region include nearly \$25 million for both Governors State University and Prairie State College. The I57/I294 Interchange project is progressing well and is a \$500,000,000 plus project potentially.

## **Thoughts on the FY2010 budget negotiations**

I feel that Governor Quinn relenting and signing the capital bill is a great first step in getting all parties together to develop a FY2010 budget that the majority of us can agree with. The state does not need and the 38<sup>th</sup> District does not want the specter of emasculating education, social services, health care and public safety operations through a budget that is not equitable. When we left Springfield a couple of weeks ago, we had overwhelming support in the House to pass a 5 year pension obligation bond which would have generated about \$2.2 billion. This bill received 100 plus votes in the House but just barely failed to pass in the Senate. Governor Quinn had the strategy of convincing some members in the Senate to withhold their support of the pension obligation bond bill. It was thought that this would force the issue of passing his bill or HB174, the so called "tax swap" bill. Though HB174 is actually a much better bill than Quinn's, it is doubtful that bill would receive 71 votes. Since the Governor seems to be in a mode of compromise, my suggestion to him would be to support the passage of the pension obligation bond. If passed in the Senate, it would free up \$2.2 billion of additional revenue and fund approximately 93% of his original requested budget. That is a scenario that I think the General Assembly, the Governor's office and most social service agencies that I have spoken to could all agree upon.



## **Jazz In the Park for Charity 2009 – 2 week countdown**

Jazz in the Park 2009 is in its final stages of planning. All of the various committees working on this highly anticipated event are to be commended for their efforts. Tickets are still available and I am proud to announce the fact that tickets can be purchased online through PayPal. Please visit the JITP website: [www.jazzintheparkforcharity.com](http://www.jazzintheparkforcharity.com).

I hope all of you plan on attending this great event. It will raise needed resources for local not for profit organizations that do a tremendous job serving our communities in various capacities. At this point, I need your support in spreading the message about the event. Please forward the site's link to your friends and encourage them to support this event. In addition, if you are able, please considering being a volunteer for the event. If you or anyone you know wants to be a volunteer, contact Suzanne Cooley @ 815.464.4851.

Thank you so much for your attention. I am gratified to be able to give you good news in this legislative update. In the near future, I will be in touch with local municipalities individually to provide additional detail about prospective IDOT and capital bill monies. I will also do an update on pertinent legislation passed in the General Assembly so far.