

Legislative Update



THE LATEST LEGISLATIVE ISSUES AFFECTING PARKS, RECREATION and CONSERVATION

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TO: IAPD Members

**FROM: Peter Murphy, JD, CAE, IAPD President and CEO
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SUBJECT: IAPD Platform Bills Advance

Lawmakers returned to the Capitol this week where they spent the bulk of their time debating bills on their respective floors. Below is a brief roundup of this week's activities.

IAPD PLATFORM BILLS ADVANCE

We are pleased to report that this week three IAPD Platform bills passed out of their chambers of origin.

As we have reported during the past several weeks, [HB 4597 \(Martwick, R.\)](#) and [SB 2991 \(Bertino-Tarrant, J.\)](#) would expand the borrowing options available for park districts by allowing those agencies to use a promissory note for short-term borrowing. This option will save the time and expense associated with more costly financing options such as bonds and tax anticipation warrants.

These bills do not increase the total amount of money a park district is legally authorized to borrow nor do they authorize a tax levy to pay for the amount borrowed. However, the legislation is important because it will provide a more cost effective way to facilitate borrowing on a short-term basis.

In addition, IAPD Platform bill [HB 4483 \(Reboletti, D.\)](#) passed the House yesterday. This IAPD Platform initiative would allow newly elected officials to satisfy Open Meetings Act training requirements by attending a special course developed by IAPD.

All three IAPD Platform bills will now head to the opposite chamber.

MOTION TO TABLE LEGISLATION TO ELIMINATE IMRF BENEFIT

We also wanted to update you on an important development to [HB 3898 \(Conroy, D.\)](#) which proposes to terminate the supplemental benefit payment, i.e., 13th check, for all present and future IMRF retirees. As a result of the many concerns raised with this legislation, the sponsor filed a motion to table [HB 3898](#) earlier this week. Although the concept could be brought forward at a later date, the proposal to eliminate the IMRF supplemental benefit payment does not appear to be moving forward at this time.

OTHER BILLS ADVANCING TO THE OPPOSITE CHAMBER

[HB 3251](#) (Franks, J. / Link, T.) passed the full House on Wednesday but with important amendments. As we previously reported, the original version of the bill would have made it very easy to consolidate or eliminate units of local government by allowing a small number of voters, and even county boards by resolution, to place dissolution referenda on the ballot. The amended version that is now in the Senate would only prohibit the General Assembly from enacting a law creating any new unit of local government. At IAPD's request, the sponsor has also stated on the record that the bill would not prohibit voters from establishing a new unit of local government like a park district.

[SB 345](#) (Hastings, M.) passed the Senate yesterday and amends PTELL to provide that the levies authorized under the Illinois Pension Code for Social Security or Medicare shall not be considered "new rates" for purposes of PTELL. This means that a taxing district that has not previously levied a tax for these purposes would be able to do so without conducting a referendum under PTELL. It is important to note, however, that the legislation does not allow a taxing district subject to PTELL to increase its overall tax rate without referendum approval. The bill now heads to the House.

[SB 3106](#) (Connelly, M. / Sandack, R.) passed the full Senate on Tuesday and would require a local government or school district that maintains an Internet website other than a social media or social networking website to post on its website a "mechanism" for members of the public to electronically communicate with each individual elected official of that unit of local government or school district. As with [HB 5623](#) (Sandack, R.) upon which we have been reporting, we will work with Representative Sandack to clarify that this legislation would only require a unit of government with a website to post a uniform single email address on its website that can be used to contact board members unless those board members already have an individual email address for that purpose.

Also this week, [SB 2854](#) (Jones III, E. / Rita, R.) passed the full Senate and now heads to the House. IAPD members will recall that this proposal is similar to legislation that has been filed the past couple years and would extend the statute of limitations for Cook County taxpayers to claim refunds for property tax overpayments or erroneous assessments from 5 years to 20 years. IAPD opposes this bill because of the financial uncertainty and potential costs it would cause member agencies that are located in Cook County.

[HB 4769](#) (Beiser, D.) passed the House today and would amend the Public Construction Bond Act to require the surety on a bond required under that Act to obtain a certificate of authority from the Department of Insurance and maintain a financial strength rating of at least A-. The purpose of the legislation is to set minimum standards for surety bonds when they are required by the Act.

Both the House and Senate have adjourned for the week and will return next Monday, April 7th. The deadline for passing legislation out of the chamber of origin in both the House and Senate is next **Friday, April 11**. With these looming deadlines, developments can occur quickly. In addition to monitoring hundreds of bills that passed out of the chamber of origin, we have reviewed hundreds of amendments during the past week because we have entered the phase of session when amendments may be filed, heard in committee and passed on the floor in a matter of only a day or two.

IAPD is your source for these legislative developments, and we will continue to update you through Legislative Updates and, when necessary, Legislative Alerts. For the latest information, [please visit our homepage](#). To check the status of all bills we are tracking, please visit the Public Policy section of our website. And, as always, please contact us at 217/523-4554 if you have questions concerning legislative matters.

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