



Transportation for Illinois Coalition FY2003



311 S. Wacker Dr., Suite 1500 Chicago, Illinois 60606-6619
312/983-7100 <http://www.ilchamber.org/ic/inf/tfic/TFICHome1.asp>

The Transportation for Illinois Coalition was founded a little more than a year ago to focus primarily on the need for Illinois to fare well as Congress considered the multi-year transportation reauthorization scheduled to expire September 30, 2003. The individual member organizations recognized a common need, and the importance of pooling our resources and our efforts to the benefit of all Illinoisans.

One of the key motivations for the coalition came from members of the Illinois congressional delegation who suggested that Illinois' poor showing during the previous reauthorization debate was due in part to Illinois interests failing to solidify their support for added money. More than one of our congressional leaders told us that diverse Illinois interests fragmented the lobbying effort for Illinois. By promoting specific projects in competition with each other, we seriously affected the state's overall transportation funding fortunes. Many Illinois leaders have felt for the past six years that the state and its citizens lost millions of dollars for transportation projects because we lacked a common voice. TFIC seeks to remedy this problem.

While we were organized to focus on reauthorization, there is a future beyond 2003 for this organization. The reauthorization debate in Washington is far from complete. Optimistic estimates for passage of a new multi-year reauthorization call for action by the end of the first quarter of 2004, but this is not certain and the outcome remains unclear. The coalition members recognize that significant transportation initiatives are multi-year in nature and require sustained attention.

It is also apparent to members of the coalition that we need to immediately redirect our work toward the State of Illinois. With the demise of Illinois First bond monies for capital projects, and the current administration's diversion of road funds to help balance the state budget, the future of Illinois' road program is in jeopardy.

While the TFIC's immediate focus has been devoted to highway and transit funding, we are conscious of major rail, waterways, and airport improvement plans that require federal, state and local government funding and cooperation. The TFIC will be fully engaged on these issues.

TFIC is poised to present a strong and unified voice to policymakers and opinion leaders at the federal, state and local levels to enhance transportation funding for Illinois. We are committed to the modernization and maintenance of Illinois' highways, railways, waterways, airports and transit systems. This report summarizes what we have accomplished and what we have learned this first year.

Sincerely,

Doug Whitley
Chairman

Transportation for Illinois Coalition FY2003 (July 2002-June 30, 2003)

Introduction

The Transportation for Illinois Coalition has developed over the past 15 months from a diverse group of business and organized labor interests into a strong and united force in support of Illinois' transportation infrastructure. Our first year accomplishments are summarized in the following pages.



However, the most significant accomplishment is, in fact, the melding of the diverse interests involved into a united and focused effort to support a strong transportation alliance for Illinois. The coalition has established a democratic manner of raising, discussing, and voting on issues and strategies that have enabled TFIC to move forward even through potentially divisive times. Our continued success will, we believe, mean economic success for Illinois and its citizens.

How to Become a Member

Membership in the TFIC is open to organizations, associations, unions, regional groups and chambers of commerce from throughout Illinois. Any organization that has members who know the importance of transportation to Illinois jobs and the economy is encouraged to join. Contact Doug Whitley at the Illinois State Chamber of Commerce (312/983-7103; dwhitley@ilchamber.org) in Chicago or any TFIC steering committee member.

I. Mission Statement

Understanding that transportation needs must be addressed comprehensively rather than in a piecemeal fashion was the driving force that united major transportation design and construction industry groups with labor and business throughout the state. This broad-based coalition has adopted the name, “Transportation for Illinois Coalition.”

The “Transportation for Illinois Coalition” (TFIC) was organized **to speak with one voice for all Illinois regarding transportation funding needs.** Organizations joining TFIC united behind the realization that, in the end, pursuing transportation resources either parochially or regionally is divisive and ineffective.

To accomplish its goal of uniting transportation interests, TFIC has and will continue to meet with government officials at all levels and promote transportation issues throughout the state. The TFIC focuses on principles and program concepts that will enable transportation leaders to move forward with a common purpose **to obtain maximum federal funding to meet Illinois’ infrastructure needs.**

No program is more critical to the economy of Illinois than federal funding for transportation needs. From its origins as the railroad capital of the nation and its development as the hub of major east-west interstate highways, to hosting the world’s busiest airport and serving as a vital link for the nation’s water traffic, Illinois has served as the central conduit for the nation’s commerce. Thus, the economies of Illinois and the nation are inextricably related.

Illinois’ transportation system plays a pivotal role in the nation’s ability to move goods and people because of its geographic location and extensive road, rail, airport and waterway network.

- The state hosts the nation’s third largest interstate highway network with five of the transcontinental interstates moving traffic through Illinois.
- Two of the nation’s top rail freight gateways are located in Illinois, with the Chicago region serving as the nation’s rail hub. Six of the seven major railroads in the nation converge in Chicago. Nearly one-third of the nation’s total rail shipments pass through the Chicago region.
- Illinois’ airport system is the second largest in the nation. O’Hare International Airport has become an international gateway and is the nation’s busiest airport with nearly 912,000 takeoffs and landings in 2001.
- Illinois ranks seventh in U.S. waterborne traffic, handling more than 114 million tons of cargo annually.

Maintaining its role as the transportation hub of the nation is a vital economic strategy for Illinois. Challenges to the quality and capacity of the Illinois transportation system are extensive and rising.

It is well documented that highway congestion in the northeastern portion of the state is the third worst in the nation.

Illinois' rail system is in urgent need of more effective switching and efficient freight handling capacity. There is also a critical need for grade separation, (overpasses and underpasses) to eliminate conflicts between trains and vehicular traffic, thus improving the safety of both road and railway systems.

Lock improvements and modernization of Illinois' river systems will allow the state to keep pace with cargo traffic on our waterways.

Rising demand for air travel and the safety needs for people and cargo must be addressed through modernization of the Illinois airport system in ways that meet the needs of all the nation's citizens.

In order to speak with one voice about these issues, TFIC has consciously avoided prioritizing projects or programs because to do so has, in the past, resulted in division and parochialism along modal or geographic lines.

While TFIC's constituent groups may debate the relative importance of any specific mode of transportation, program or project, all agree that the comprehensive approach to transportation funding is the best hope for improving all transportation systems throughout the state and call upon our elected officials in Illinois and Washington to do likewise.

TFIC in Washington, D.C.



TFIC Chairman Doug Whitley with Illinois Congressman Ray LaHood



AFL-CIO President Margaret Blackshere with Illinois Senator Dick Durbin and Doug Whitley, President of the Illinois State Chamber of Commerce.



Margaret Blackshere with Illinois Congressman Luis Gutierrez.

II. Guiding Principles

- **TFIC supports increased funding levels for our National Transportation System.**
- **TFIC supports increasing Illinois' share of transportation funding significantly above the 3.38 percent guarantee in TEA-21.** We will support the Illinois congressional delegation in proposals they recommend that will bring the additional required resources to Illinois, including options that would bring new resources into the Highway Trust Fund.
- **TFIC supports the “firewalls” contained in TEA-21 to ensure funds that are generated by highway users and other transportation-related revenues are spent only on transportation needs.**
- **TFIC supports maintaining the current highway/transit funding ratio of 80-20.**
- **TFIC supports distribution of all transit formula funds according to needs-based formulas.**
- **TFIC supports crediting the Highway Trust Fund with the “earned interest” on its unexpended balances.**
- **TFIC supports transportation user fees as dedicated funds and opposes diverting any of those funds for purposes other than for roads, bridges, and public safety.**

TFIC in Collinsville



Jim Pennekamp of the Leadership Council of Southwest Illinois addresses the crowd at the November 2002 breakfast meeting in Collinsville.

III. TFIC First Year Highlights

Growing Organization

TFIC has developed over the course of its first year into a democratic and cohesive group of interests united by the shared understanding that Illinois' transportation network is critical to its economic success. Beginning with a handful of interested organizations, the coalition has grown to include more than 30 statewide, community and regional organizations. TFIC is partnering with other like-minded organizations, such as the Business Leaders for Transportation and local and regional chambers of commerce throughout the state, moving shoulder-to-shoulder to win more federal funding for Illinois' transportation needs. The coalition operates through a governing committee, the TFIC Steering Committee, and a series of subcommittees. The coalition has hired a Springfield-based grassroots and public affairs firm and a Washington-based lobbying firm to assist in its efforts.

Public Outreach

An important aspect of TFIC's mission is to help educate Illinoisans using public briefings and media coverage about federal transportation funding and the important role it plays in Illinois' economy. Toward that end, TFIC coordinated and co-hosted four transportation breakfast briefings in key congressional districts. These were intentionally coordinated with local chambers, business organizations and organized labor, and were held in communities represented by congressmen who hold strategic committee memberships. Nearly 500 people attended these briefings in Naperville, Deerfield, Champaign and Collinsville. These briefings helped kick off the TFIC effort, and generated media and membership interest.



Illinois Congressman Mark Kirk headed the panel speaking at a Lake County event in November 2002. Seated (left to right) are Mark Damisch, President of the Village of Northbrook; Carla Berroyer of Wilbur Smith Associates; and Ed King, Director of Government Relations for Walgreens.

A September 2003 breakfast briefing modeled after the first four successful events highlighted the transportation funding issue for businesses and individuals in the northwest suburban area of Chicago. Co-hosted by TFIC, Business Leaders for Transportation, and several local chambers of commerce in the northwest suburban area, the briefing represented another opportunity to reach out to the general public.

Coalition leaders have made other efforts throughout the year to reach interested businesses and individuals, including speaking engagements at statewide conferences highlighting transportation as a critical issue for the state's economy and its workers.

Outreach to Congress

On April 7th, U.S. Senator James Inhofe, chair of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, brought his committee to Chicago for an in-district field hearing on transportation funding needs. TFIC outreach to Senator Peter Fitzgerald, a member of the committee, helped facilitate this hearing. Three panels of witnesses testified, including Tim Martin, Secretary of the Illinois Department of Transportation; Miguel D'Escoto, director of the Chicago Department of Transportation, and Doug Whitley, president of the Illinois State Chamber of Commerce and chair of the Transportation for Illinois Coalition. Other TFIC members testifying were: Margaret Blackshere, president of the Illinois AFL-CIO; and Jim Pennekamp, executive director of Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois.



Part of the TFIC contingent that visited Washington, D.C. in September 2003 included, left to right, Troy Kutz, Kevin Hayes, Margaret Blackshere, Jim Bruner, Eric Fields, Kirk Brown, Doug Whitley, David Oates, Joe Cowan and John Henriksen.

At Home: TFIC encourages its member organizations and *their* members to keep in touch with congressmen when these leaders are home in Illinois. Several coalition members visit with their congressmen on a regular basis. TFIC also scheduled two in-district meetings with Congressmen LaHood and Weller during the August recess to reiterate the importance of additional federal funding for Illinois. Congressman LaHood is on House Appropriations and Congressman Weller is on House Ways and Means.

TFIC members are expected to have and maintain relationships with elected officials at the state and federal levels on an ongoing basis. Our members should be active with the congressional delegation and state lawmakers so that the collected effort of TFIC members allows the coalition to interface with the entire congressional and state policymaking team. TFIC can also help coalition members to nurture relationships with elected officials through events, lobby days, fundraising opportunities and other means.

In Washington, D.C.: Member organizations have traveled to the nation's capital many times during the past year, taking copies of the TFIC mission statement and talking with the delegation about transportation funding. Washington lobby days for TFIC member organizations were scheduled for March 17-19, April 29-30, September 10-11, September 15-18, and early October 2003.

Outreach to Local Governments and Organizations

In an attempt to broaden the appeal to Congress for more transportation funds for Illinois, TFIC drafted a resolution for use and adoption by local governments and local chambers of commerce. The resolution calls on Congress to increase the total funding for transportation and to increase Illinois' share of the nation's total. Several local governments and chambers have adopted the resolution and forwarded it to the appropriate congressional offices.



Carla Berroyer, senior transportation policy specialist for Wilbur Smith Associates and former IDOT Deputy Director for Policy and Federal Affairs, explained the basics of federal transportation funding at the breakfast meetings.

Media Outreach

Though the organization is newly formed, TFIC is beginning to be recognized among the statewide media as a source of information on the federal transportation reauthorization bill. This is the result of outreach by the coalition beginning in January to the state's transportation reporters. Initially, the coalition sent letters to these reporters, and has followed up several times since with phone calls. Coalition leaders have distributed two op-ed pieces to targeted media outlets. Coalition organization members have responded to media coverage in their local newspapers by sending letters to the editor.

In August 2003, TFIC joined with Business Leaders for Transportation and the Metropolitan Planning Council to issue a joint press release calling on Congress to approve a multi-year transportation reauthorization measure with funding of \$375 billion. This historic combined announcement underscores the breadth and depth of support for additional transportation funding for Illinois.



Illinois Department of Transportation Secretary Tim Martin addresses a Transportation Breakfast Forum sponsored by the Northern Illinois Business Political Action Committee at Harper College in September 2003. TFIC was among the co-sponsors of the event.

Highlights of the media coverage TFIC has helped generate to underscore the importance of federal transportation funding increases include:

- Coverage of transportation reauthorization's affect on local areas where TFIC transportation briefings were held;
- Banner stories in the Daily Southtown and Chicago Tribune about the need for increased federal funding
- Editorials against diversions of money from the road fund for general government use in Peoria, Aurora, Decatur, and Carbondale newspapers.

Keeping Members Informed

Since January 2003, the TFIC has distributed 18 biweekly e-mails outlining the latest transportation-related news from Washington, D.C. and from the state capitol. TFIC will continue this electronic update for all coalition members and their member organizations.

The free flow of information to coalition members is one of the group's priorities. Updates from Washington, articles of interest from throughout the country and other bits of information relevant to the transportation reauthorization and transportation funding are distributed for members who bring them to the attention of the coalition staff. The goal is to promote a shared understanding of the latest developments affecting our transportation funding. These updates are forwarded with attribution to the member who alerted us to the information and are not edited or censored by the coalition.

If you or your organization would like to be added to the e-mail distribution list, please contact Helen Adorjan at: hadorjan@fgi.net.



Mike Scholefield, representing the Chicago Southland Chamber of Commerce, makes a point at one of the breakfast meetings. Seated is Mary Clumpner, also of the Southland Chamber.

Dick Smith, Director of the Office of Planning and Program for the Illinois Department of Transportation, answers questions at an event.

Illinois Congressman Mark Kirk, left, talks with TFIC chair Doug Whitley.

Subcommittee Development

As the discussions about transportation and federal and state actions affecting funding have evolved, TFIC has seen the need to develop working groups to delve into specific areas of interest. We have created and continue to maintain subcommittees to do this work.

Policy Subcommittee: This group wrestled with the language of the TFIC mission statement and guiding principles, developing a statement that all members of the coalition have endorsed.

Washington, D.C. Subcommittee: This group keeps track of and coordinates visits to Washington by coalition member organizations. They are responsible for keeping the calendar of Washington activities. The subcommittee also works to develop a comprehensive approach to successfully lobbying Congress and the administration for more transportation funding. The subcommittee met early in the year, and helped identify Washington-based professionals who are advising the coalition. The subcommittee also suggested development of a second subcommittee, the **Washington, D.C. Fly-In subcommittee**, which focuses on the timing and coordination of TFIC lobby days in Washington.

Membership Subcommittee: As the TFIC continued to grow, and nonmembers were contacting TFIC members with requests to join, the steering committee appointed a membership committee to take a more comprehensive approach to new member recruitment. This membership subcommittee has solicited new members through mailings and phone calls and continues to try to identify organizations that might want to join TFIC's efforts.

Messages Subcommittee: This subcommittee was created to develop and coordinate messages for the U.S. Senate Committee field hearing on transportation in Chicago on April 7th. It remains in place to address future message refinement needs.

Transit Subcommittee: An important transportation constituency in Illinois is the mass transit interest. This subcommittee exists to act as a liaison to the transit community.

Constitutional Amendment Subcommittee: This subcommittee has been appointed to research, along with outside legal assistance, the possible means of protecting road monies in the future. It was created following the largest diversion of road funds in Illinois history for the support of other governmental spending.

IV. Steering Committee

Chris Agnitsch — Rockford-Winnebago County Better Roads Association
Jerri Andrew — McLean County Chamber of Commerce
Rick Baker — Illinois Quad City Chamber of Commerce
Margaret Blackshere — Illinois AFL-CIO
Kirk Brown — Consulting Engineers Council of Illinois
Mary Clumpner — Chicago Southland Chamber
Fred Crews — Egyptian Contractors Association, Inc.
Monty Docter — Maclair Asphalt Co. Inc.
Mary Effrein — Quincy Area Chamber of Commerce
Patrice Ekins — Underground Contractors Association
Wayne Emmer — Illinois Cement Company
Eric Fields — The Associated General Contractors of Illinois
David Foree — Southwestern Illinois Building and Construction Trades
Dennis Gannon — Chicago Federation of Labor
Tim Garvey — Southern Illinois Construction Advancement Program
Keith Gleason — Illinois Conference of Teamsters and Teamsters Jt. Council 65
Don Gorman — Mid-Central Illinois Regional Council of Carpenters
Bill Grams — Illinois Road and Transportation Builders Association
Steve Hatcher — Greater Aurora Chamber of Commerce
John Henriksen — Illinois Association of Aggregate Producers
John Hudson — Operating Engineers Local Unions No. 965
David Kennedy — Consulting Engineers Council of Illinois
Amy Looten — Quincy Area Chamber of Commerce
Holly Lown — Metra
Roger Marquardt — American Concrete Pavement Association
John McGovern — Underground Contractors Association
Julie Moore — Chamber of Commerce for Decatur and Macon County
Steve Nailor — Rockford-Winnebago County Better Roads Association
Rob Nash — Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce
Chris Newkirk — Precast/Prestressed Producers of Illinois and Wisconsin
William Orrill — Laborers-Employers Cooperation and Education Trust
Satch Pecori — Consulting Engineers Council of Illinois
Jim Pennekamp — Leadership Council of Southwest Illinois
Dick Rawlings — Jacksonville Area Chamber of Commerce
David Rock — Underground Contractors Association
Roger Schoenekase — Mid-Central Illinois Regional Council of Carpenters
Michael Scholefield — Chicago Southland Chamber
Jim Schwarz — Route 51 Coalition
Mike Skarr — Naperville Area Chamber of Commerce
Marvin Traylor — Illinois Asphalt Pavement Association
Joe Ward — I.U.O.E Local 150
Bradley Warren — The Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce
Vince Waters — American Concrete Pavement Association, Illinois
Laura Weis — Champaign County Chamber of Commerce
Doug Whitley — Illinois State Chamber of Commerce
Mike Zahn — Operating Engineers Local Unions No. 965

TFIC Subcommittees

Policy Subcommittee:

Bill Grams, chair
Monty Docter
Eric Fields
Steve Hatcher
John Henriksen
David Kennedy
Bill Orrill
Brad Warren

Membership Subcommittee:

Eric Fields, Chair
Bill Grams
John Henriksen
David Kennedy
Bill Orrill/Saun Stott
Doug Whitley
Mike Zahn

Transit Subcommittee:

Bill Grams
Mike Scholefield
Laura Weis

Messages Subcommittee:

Margaret Blackshere
Doug Whitley
Bill Grams
Eric Fields
Steve Nailor

D.C. subcommittee:

Doug Whitley, chair
Mary Clumpner
Tim Garvey
John Henriksen
Satch Pecori
Jim Pennekamp

D.C. Fly-In Subcommittee:

John Henriksen
David Kennedy
Bill Looby (AFL-CIO)

Constitutional Amendment Subcommittee:

David Kennedy, chair
Monty Docter
Eric Fields
Bill Grams
Mike Zahn

U.S. Senators from Illinois

Richard J. Durbin

Democrat
dick@durbin.senate.gov
332 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510
Phone: 202-224-2152
Fax: 202-228-0400

230 South Dearborn St. #3892
Chicago, IL 60604
Phone: 312-353-4952
Fax: 312-353-0150

525 South Eighth Street
Springfield, IL 62703
Phone: 217-492-4062
Fax: 217-492-4382

701 North Court Street
Marion, IL 62959
Phone: 618-998-8812
Fax: 618-997-0176

Peter G. Fitzgerald

Republican
senator_fitzgerald@fitzgerald.senate.gov
555 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510
Phone: 202-224-2854
Fax: 202-228-1372

520 South Eighth Street
Springfield, IL 62703
Phone: 217-492-5089
Fax: 217-492-5099

230 South Dearborn Street
Suite 3900
Chicago, IL 60604
Phone: 312-886-3506
Fax: 312-886-3514

Ginger Creek Village
Suite 7B
GlenCarbon, IL 62034
Phone: 618-692-0364
Fax: 618-692-1499

115 West First Street
Suite 100
Dixon, IL 61021
Phone: 815-288-3140
Fax: 815-288-3147

U.S. Representatives from Illinois

District 1

Bobby L. Rush
Democrat
bobby.rush@mail.house.gov
2416 Rayburn Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-4372
Fax: 202-226-0333

700 East 79th Street
Chicago, IL 60619
Phone: 773-224-6500
Fax: 773-224-9624

District 2

Jesse L. Jackson Jr.
Democrat
comments@jessejacksonjr.org
2419 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-0773
Fax: 202-225-0899

17926 South Halsted
Homewood, IL 60430
Phone: 708-798-6000
Fax: 708-798-6160

District 3

William O. Lipinski
Democrat
il03wyr@housemail.house.gov
2188 Rayburn House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202/225-5701
Fax: 202/225-1012

5832 S. Archer Avenue
Chicago, IL 60638
Phone: 312-886-0481
Fax: 773-767-9395

5239 West 95th Street
Oak Lawn, IL 60453
Phone: 708/952-0860

19 West Hillgrove
LaGrange, IL 60525
Phone: 708/352-0524

District 4

Luis V. Gutierrez
Democrat
luis.gutierrez@mail.house.gov
2367 Rayburn House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202/225-8203
Fax: 202/225-7810

3455 West North Ave.
Chicago, IL 60647
Phone: 773-384-1655
Fax: 773-384-1685

1310 West 18th Street
Chicago, IL 60608
Phone: 312/666-3882

District 5

Rahm Emanuel
Democrat
1319 Longworth House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-4061
Fax: N/A

3742 West Irving Park Rd
Chicago, IL 60618
Phone: 773-267-5926
Fax: 773-267-6583

District 6

Henry J. Hyde
Republican
www.house.gov/hyde
2110 Rayburn House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-4561
Fax: 202-225-1166

50 East Oak Street
Addison, IL 60101
Phone: 630-832-5950
Fax: 630-832-5969

District 7

Danny K Davis
Democrat
1222 Longworth House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-5006
Fax: 202-225-5641

3333 W. Arthington
Ste. 130
Chicago, IL 60624
Phone: 773-533-7520
Fax: 773-533-7530

District 8

Philip M. Crane
Republican
233 Cannon House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-3711
Fax: 202-225-7830

300 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Ste. 3
Lake Villa, IL 60046
Phone: 847-265-9000
Fax: 847-265-9028

1100 West Northwest Highway
Palatine, IL 60067
Phone: 847-358-9160
Fax: 847-358-9185

District 9

Janice D. Schakowsky
Democrat
jan.schakowsky@mail.house.gov
515 Cannon House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-2111
Fax: 202-226-6890

5533 N. Broadway
Chicago, IL 60640
Phone: 773-506-7100
Fax: 773-506-9202

820 Davis Street
Suite 101
Evanston, IL 60201
Phone: 847/328-3409
Fax: 847/328-3425

767 W. Milwaukee Ave.
Niles, IL 60714
Phone: 847/647-6955
Fax: 847/647-6954

District 10

Mark Steven Kirk
Republican
rep.kirk@mail.house.gov
1531 Longworth House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202/225-4835
Fax: 202/225-0837

102 Wilmot Road
Ste. 200
Deerfield, IL 60015
Phone: 847/940-0202
Fax: 847/940-7143
20 South Martin Luther King Dr.
Waukegan, IL 60085
Phone: 847/662-0101
Fax: 847/662-7519

District 11

Gerald C. "Jerry" Weller

Republican

www.house.gov/weller

1210 Longworth House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-3635
Fax: 202-225-3521

2701 Black Road
Ste. 201
Joliet, IL 60432
Phone: 815-740-2028
Fax: 815-740-2037

District 12

Jerry F. Costello

Democrat

www.house.gov/costello

2454 Rayburn House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-5661
Fax: 202-225-0285

155 Lincoln Place Court
Belleville, IL 62221
Phone: 618-233-8026
Fax: 618-233-8765

1363 Niedringhaus Avenue
Granite City, IL 62040
Phone: 618/451-7065
Fax: 618/451-2126

District 13

Judy Biggert

Republican

www.house.gov/biggert

1213 Longworth House Office
Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202/225-3515
Fax: 202/225-9420

115 W. 55th Street
Ste.100
Clarendon Hills, IL 60514-1593
Phone: 630-655-2052
Fax: 630-655-1061

District 14

J. Dennis Hastert

Republican

dhastert@mail.house.gov

235 Cannon House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-2976
Fax: 202-225-0697

27 North River Street
Batavia, IL 60510
Phone: 630-406-1114
Fax: 630-406-1808

119 W. First St.
Dixon, IL 61021
Phone: 815/288-0680
Fax: 815/288-0743

District 15

Timothy V. Johnson

Republican

rep.johnson@mail.house.gov

1229 Longworth House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202/225-2371
Fax: 202/226-0791

2004 Fox Drive
Champaign, IL 61820
Phone: 217/403-4690
Fax: 217/403-4691

1 Brickyard Drive
Suite 201
Bloomington, IL 61701
Phone: 309/663-7049
Fax: 309/663-9880

655 W. Lincoln
Unit B
Charleston, IL 61920
Phone: 217/348-6759
Fax: 217/348-6761

1001 Market Street
Suite 102
Mt. Carmel, IL 62863
Phone: 618/262-8719
Fax: 618/262-8859

District 16

Donald A. Manzullo

Republican

www.house.gov/manzullo

2228 Rayburn House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202/225-5676
Fax: 202/225-5284

415 South Mulford Rd
Rockford, IL 61108
Phone: 815-394-1231
Fax: 815/394-3930

181 Virginia Ave.
Crystal Lake, IL 60014
Phone: 815/356-9800
Fax: 815/356-9803

District 17

Lane Evans

Democrat

lane.evans@mail.house.gov

2211 Rayburn House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202/225-5905
Fax: 202/225-5396

1535 47th Avenue
Ste. 5
Moline, IL 61265
Phone: 309/793-5760
Fax: 309/762-9193

261 N. Broad Street
Ste. 5
Galesburg, IL 61401
Phone: 309/342-4411
Fax: 309/342-9749

District 18

Ray LaHood

Republican

1424 Longworth House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-6201
Fax: 202-225-9249

100 NE Monroe St.
Ste. 100
Peoria, IL 61602-1003
Phone: 309-671-7027
Fax: 309-671-7309

209 West State Street
Jacksonville, IL 62650
Phone: 217-245-1431
Fax: 217-243-6852

3050 Montvale Dr.
Ste.D
Springfield, IL 62704
Phone: 217-793-0808
Fax: 217-793-9724

District 19

John M. Shimkus

Republican

www.house.gov/shimkus

513 Cannon House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-5271
Fax: 202-225-5880

3130 Chatham Road
Suite C
Springfield, IL 62704
Phone: 217-492-5090
Fax: 217-492-5096

508 West Main Street
Collinsville, IL 62234
Phone: 618-344-3065
Fax: 618-344-4215

120 South Fair
Olney, IL 62450
Phone: 618/392-7737
Fax: 618/395-8178

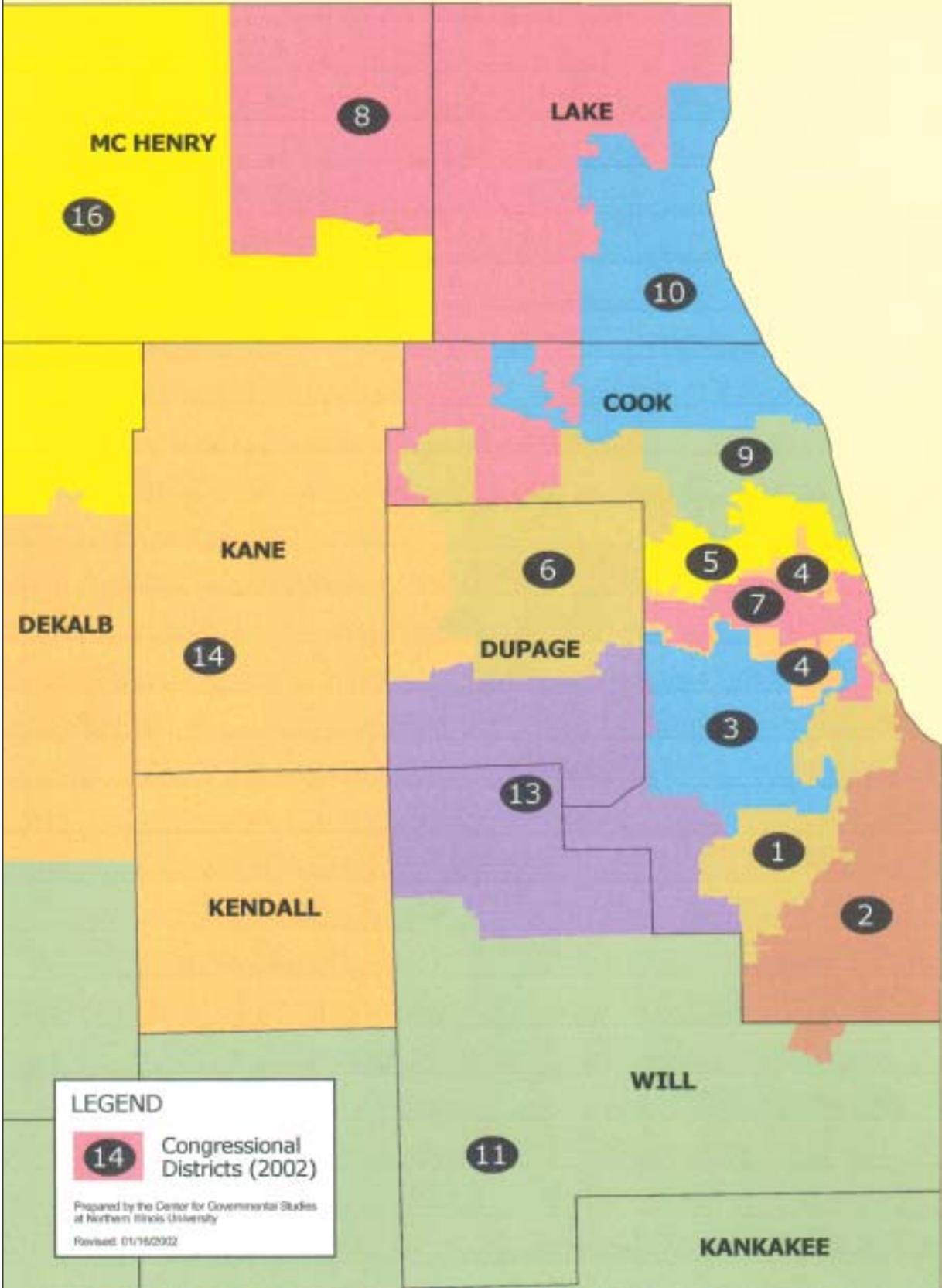
110 East Locust Street
Room 12
Harrisburg, IL 62946
Phone: 618/252-8271
Fax: 618/252-8317

221 E. Broadway
Centralia, IL 62801
Phone: 618/532-9676
Fax: 618/532-9676

ILLINOIS CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS



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email: TFICUpdate@ILChamber.org**