



# Cole's Clipboard

STATE REPRESENTATIVE SANDY COLE

## **50% Income Tax Increase and Additional Fee Increases** (See [www.repcole62.com](http://www.repcole62.com) for details)

**Dear Neighbors,**

With Governor Quinn's massive tax increase proposal looming large in our state's future, my House Republican colleagues and I remain firmly opposed to tax and fee increases in the current economic climate. We believe it is wrong to even consider such increases (*that will heavily affect middle-class working families*) when there are several viable alternatives.

Illinois' roads, bridges and schools are in desperate need of repair or replacement. And, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, our unemployment rate has increased to 7.9 percent. As a matter of fact, Illinois had the nation's highest jump in the number of people filing new unemployment claims this month – up by 3,791 claims (almost 14%).

Democrat leaders have put off passage of a capital budget for way too long. Our previous Governor has been gone for several weeks, and he cannot be blamed anymore for lack of action on this issue. The construction season is ready to begin, and both House and Senate Republicans support quick passage of a public works program that would address Illinois' deteriorating infrastructure and provide thousands of jobs – *without tax or fee increases*.

The Republican capital budget plan outlines options that would generate about \$1 billion annually in state revenues, allowing a \$12 billion bonding program to be used for roads, bridges, schools and other infrastructure priorities. This proposal would permit the state to initiate a \$26 billion capital program with access to greatly needed federal funds.

Funding for this proposed capital program will include the permanent termination of Road Fund diversions (\$700 million) to the General Revenue Fund (GRF). Options for replacing the diverted revenue would include: expansion of positions at existing riverboat casinos, a Chicago casino, racetrack slot machines, video poker legalization at existing casinos, and professional management of the Illinois State Lottery. These options are estimated to raise more than \$1.5 billion annually.

Government transparency and ethics are a vital component to the success of a capital program. That being said, Republican leaders have proposed that the Governor's Office of Management and Budget must submit quarterly reports (that would track capital spending) to the Comptroller, Treasurer and the four caucus leaders.

The time for action is now - jobs and economic growth need to be our *top priority* for 2009!