



Legislative News

by: Keith George

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The Illinois General Assembly is in full swing now. In this column, we will examine various bills or resolutions of a law enforcement nature. A synopsis of the bill in question will follow with sponsor documentation where applicable.

We will also comment as to whether a bill is law enforcement friendly and suggest that you call your local representatives and encourage him or her to assist passage or to kill a bill in whatever house it may appear (House or Senate). **It is important that you become involved in these matters. Your approval or rejection of any bill should be made known to your representative.**

HB3963

The Police Pension Widow Increase bill was introduced on February 26, 2009, in the House by State Representative Jim Sacia. This bill is designed to provide automatic increases to the widow or surviving spouse of deceased officers.

A short synopsis as it was introduced: This bill amends the Downstate Police, the Chicago Police, and the Chicago Municipal Article of the Illinois Pension Code. The bill provides for automatic annual increases in widow's annuities or surviving spouse pension payable to the surviving spouses of police officers. It amends the State Mandates Act to require implementation without reimbursement.

This is a good bill. It corrects a flaw in the current pension codes. Currently when an officer retires they receive a mandatory increase in their retirement pension. If the retired officer dies the pension benefit remains constant and does not increase annually. This bill addresses this flaw and will mandate that the pension continues to increase for the surviving spouse and family of the dead officer. It is a bill that MAP supports and encourages our membership to contact your local representatives as well as the sponsor State Representative Jim Sacia to express your support.

The bill has been referred to Rules Committee. Check out this bill online at the Illinois General Assembly page at www.ilga.gov and click on Bills and Resolutions.