

Tax Reform  
Action Coalition  
867 West Buckingham  
Chicago, IL 60657  
312-458-9202  
www.trac-il.org

## Neighborhood & Community Groups Supporting TRAC

Bucktown Community  
Organization  
Citizens for Fair  
Assessments & Taxes  
East Lakeview Neighbors  
Edgewater Community  
Council  
Friends of Holstein Park  
Hamlin Park  
Neighborhood Assn.  
Hawthorne Neighbors  
Jefferson Park  
Neighborhood Assn.  
Lake View Citizens' Council  
Lincoln Central  
North Logan Block Club  
Northcenter Chamber of  
Commerce  
Northcenter/Lincoln Square  
Neighborhood Assn.  
Old Irving Park Association  
One For All Chicago  
Portage Park  
Neighborhood Assn.  
Southport Neighbors  
Triangle Neighbors  
U.N.I.T.E. Civic  
Ukrainian Village  
Preservation Society  
West DePaul  
Neighborhood Association  
West Walker Association  
Wrightwood Neighbors

## *You Make the Difference!*

# Report from Springfield

It ain't over! Everyone is still "cautiously" optimistic about getting this passed January 14-15, 2004! It looks like we have the votes we need to convince the "leadership" that this is a good bill and it needs to be called for a vote!

The efforts of the Assessor and his office were outstanding. They met the volunteers from the bus trip at the Capitol. Everyone fanned out and made contact with members of both Houses. Some people even stopped in and left a note for the Governor! In all there were over 251 "notes" left for these Representatives and Senators! It had an impact!

The bill wasn't called for a vote. There was a lot of "horse-trading" that went on in the last few days of this veto session. Apparently people don't vote for an issue because it represents good government and it is fair. There are still options that everyone is

working on to garner more votes.

There is one provision that was added at the "suggestion" of the "leadership"...a sunset provision. It means that these caps of 7% would only be in effect until the year 2010.



TRAC has been told by many including people in the Assessor's office and some of our state Representatives that most laws are written with a sunset provision. This "sunsetting" will provide the motivation for our lawmakers to stay focused on a real overhaul of the entire property tax system. This bill is a **huge** first step but it is only the first step.

This bill, SB1498, now has some opposition. The Retailers and Manufacturing Association (IRMA), the Illinois Manufacturing Association and the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce are working to defeat this bill. They fear a shift in the tax burden to their side. What they fail to acknowledge is that for over the last decade the homeowners have borne the brunt of the tax increases due to the relief that they got from changes in their system. It is a fight now between individuals and families on one side and big business on the other! And if the Governor doesn't see this then he is not a governor for the PEOPLE! He travels the state and says that he cares about the people in Cairo, Alton and Carbondale. What about his own neighbors that just got socked with increases of 60-120% in their assessments?

## **You Made the Difference!**

Your phone calls, emails, letters and faxes to your State Representatives and Senators had a huge impact on SB1498. Between November 4, 2003, 33 Representatives and Senators signed on as sponsors and cosponsors of this bill! We have listed everyone on our web site! Your messages to the Mayor and the Aldermen worked too. The City Council also passed a resolution in support of this bill in Springfield.

## **Letters...We Need Letters!**

TRAC is going to "publish" a book of letters from our neighbors called "Letters from the Edge." We are asking you to write a letter telling your story about the impact that these increases are making on your life. We want to tell the "human" side of these devastating increases. They can be hand written. Nothing fancy folks! Please include a picture of you with your dog or family and kids! This is a PR campaign to tug at the heart strings of these Scrooges! It must be kept to one page though! **We need them at TRAC's office by December 22.** They will be delivered during the first week of January to "targeted" state officials and the media. The prologue will be written by Fr. Grassi from St. Josaphat who spoke so eloquently at the "Tea Party" in August.

## Call to Action!

### What You Need to Do Before January 14-15

Continue making the calls and sending the emails to your state lawmakers before the issue comes up again in mid-January. Thank them for their support. Ask them to go out and recruit more co-sponsors for this bill. We want each Representative to commit to getting two more co-sponsors each in the House and the Senators to commit to getting one more co-sponsor each in the Senate. It isn't enough for them to just vote for the bill. We want them to "lobby" on our behalf to make sure that it gets passed!

## Send a "Bah Humbug" Message!

Tis' the season folks! Sorry to interrupt your holidays BUT...we can't quit now! While you are sending out your holiday cards to friends and family SAVE three cards. We are asking you to send a "bah humbug" message to the leadership of the State of Illinois. We have listed the home addresses of House Speaker Mike Madigan, Senate President Emil Jones and Gov. Blagojevich. They need to know while they are all nestled snugly in their beds dreaming of sugar plums...some of us may be out in the snow looking for a place to live!

We want you to send a holiday card with the following message in the inside of the card:

Your name, Your address, and the amount of your reassessment increase (50, 70, 120%) with the message – pass SB1498.

**Governor and Mrs. Rod Blagojevich**  
2934 W. Sunnyside  
Chicago, IL 60625

**Mr. and Mrs. Emil Jones, Jr.**  
11357 S. Lowe  
Chicago, IL 60628

**Mr. and Mrs. Michael Madigan**  
6400 S. Keeler  
Chicago, IL 60629

**Does your group want to be listed as supporting TRAC?**

**... e-mail us at  
president@trac-il.org**

## In Conclusion...

It has been a long road and the journey has just begun. We have met so many wonderful people along the way...your commitment and support has gotten us to Springfield! Your efforts like passing out flyers...putting up window signs "Repeal and Reform," sending out an email, making a phone call, going to a meeting or riding a bus down to Springfield...these are the things that you have done that has made this journey for reform so rewarding. We hope that you will continue to support us. Thank you. And Happy Holidays from all of us at TRAC.

## A Little Housekeeping Item

As you know, TRAC is a volunteer organization that doesn't get funding from anywhere but membership and donations. We are trying to keep our newsletter going because we feel that it is important to keep you informed. Postage is a big expense for us. We know that not everyone has email...but if you are receiving this newsletter in the mail and you have an email address we are asking that you let us know that so that we can send you the newsletter via email and save postage.

Write us at [www.trac-il.org](http://www.trac-il.org). Also, if you haven't renewed your membership in awhile, could you please do that? We still have many things to do and our coffers are running low! Thanks.

www.trac-il.org  
312-458-9202  
Chicago, IL 60657  
867 West Buckingham  
Tax Reform Action Coalition

