



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **South Suburban Mayors Group Testifies in Support of Southland Reactivation Legislation**

On Thursday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, representatives of the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA) testified in the House Revenue and Finance Committee in support of [House Bill 1842, House Amendment 1](#) (Rep. Anthony DeLuca), model legislation that offers an immediate opportunity to “build back better” and to spur new growth and redevelopment of blighted and vacant properties within the Southland region.

Representative DeLuca (D-Chicago Heights), lead sponsor and Chairman of the House Cities and Villages Committee, has been a champion of this legislation known as the Southland Reactivation Act due to its potential to “reactivate” or revitalize blighted or underperforming tax-exempt commercial and industrial property in partnership with the South Suburban Land Bank and Development Authority and Cook County Land Bank.

DeLuca, introducing his bill to Committee members said, “This innovative legislation is proposed as a pilot program for the south suburbs and establishes a Southland Reactivation property designation which is a means to lower effective property tax bills for qualifying sites for a 12 year period.” He added, “This legislation seeks to bring back on the tax rolls municipal-held tax exempt parcels in areas ripe for redevelopment within Chicago’s southern suburbs.”

Mayor Rick Reinbold, Village of Richton Park, [testified](#) that this legislation is a high [priority for SSMMA](#), a council of government with 45 member municipalities representing nearly 750,000 residents. He spoke of the struggle to get troubled properties back in productive re-use and said, “We believe that House Bill 1842 creates an economic development tool that has the potential—at no cost to the State— to address blight and replace and expand the tax base and local jobs through the re-establishment of strong industrial and commercial properties throughout the south suburbs, something sorely needed.”

SSMMA members support this legislative effort which provides both a new economic development tool in the tool kit for the South Suburbs and a near-term property tax solution as it creates a mechanism for bringing tax exempt properties back on to the tax rolls which would benefit all the local taxing districts.

SSMMA executive director Kristi DeLaurentiis stated “SSMMA has been working with the Cook County Assessor’s Office, our Southland legislators, and other officials for over a year to advance this legislation, limited to municipal-owned or land bank held properties that are tax exempt and meet other stringent criteria.” She noted that the bill, as written, requires notification and annual reporting to impacted taxing

bodies stating “once we discuss the goal of the legislation—to get tax exempt parcels back on the tax rolls—other officials are 100% on board.”

Reinbold concluded, “We all recognize the need to spur new investment within the south suburbs in order to reactivate, stabilize, and grow the tax base and local jobs in a sustainable manner. This bill could lead to the generation of important new revenue for schools and other taxing bodies.”

Members of the House Revenue and Finance Committee reacted very favorably to the proposed legislation and anticipate progress to advance it this session. SSMMA pledged to work together with members of the General Assembly and other stakeholders to see it signed into law.

More information on HB 1842, HA 1, the Southland Reactivation Act, is available [here](#).

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