



NEWS

From the Illinois Senate
State Senator Dave Koehler

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Koehler votes to pass Fiscal Year 2009 Budget

Springfield – State Senator Dave Koehler (D-Peoria) has voted to pass the State of Illinois Fiscal Year 2009 Operating Budget. The budget contains funding for primary and secondary education, as well as funds for.

“In these tough economic times, we have come up with a workable combination of revenue and spending to fulfill our obligations to education and human services programs for the state. I am also pleased to see many of the items I have been interested in have been included in the budget. Many of these important programs will help communities continue to grow and will help government serve the public”, Senator Koehler said.

Senator Koehler mentioned education funding is a top priority of his. In the Fiscal Year 2009 Budget, education funding is slated to increase by \$516 million, bringing the State Board of Education appropriation to \$7.609 billion. A \$141.2 million increase is included for General State Aid and Hold Harmless grants to provide a \$225 per pupil increase to the Foundation Level, bringing that level up to \$5,959 per student. Mandated Categorical are funded at 100% with a total appropriation of \$1.782 billion, providing a \$115.4 million increase from the Fiscal Year 2008 level. Early Childhood Education will be funded at \$380.3 million, providing a \$32.4 million increase from last year.

Higher education funding, for universities and community colleges, will see an increase in funding of \$55.4 million for Fiscal Year 2009. All universities throughout the state will receive a 2.8% increase in funding. MAP grants are appropriated at \$399.1 million. This is an increase of \$18 million from Fiscal Year 2008

“Making sure the education of our children moves forward and not backward is a priority of mine and of my colleagues in the General Assembly. We knew, from the beginning of this process, that, even in these trying economic times, we would have to keep increasing the funding for education. We need to keep up with the newest learning technologies that many other nations currently use. We have to make sure our children can compete with these countries in the global marketplace and the best way to do that is by making certain they have the tools and resources necessary to educate them,” Senator Koehler said.

Another area of the budget of interest to Senator Koehler is human services funding. The Department of Human Services will see an increase of \$331.8 million for Fiscal Year 2009.

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“The Department of Human Services covers programs ranging from nursing homes to sexual assault and prevention. The increase in funding for this important department means that programs within the department are going to see better services,” Senator Koehler said.

Nursing homes statewide will receive \$25 million from the state budget and also a federal match of \$25 million, bringing the total to \$50 million. Sexual assault and prevention programs along with domestic violence prevention programs will both receive \$1.4 million in funding each.

“By funding programs to educate our children, by allocating money to better our universities and community colleges and by making sure our human service programs, not only stay operational, but expand and help those who need help the most, we are focusing on many of the priorities I have been concerned with for years,” Senator Koehler said.

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