



*From the desk of
State Representative Jim Sacia*

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*****Guest Column*****

At a Veterans Job Fair on November 10th, at the Freeport Library, I along with Senator Bivins, County Board Chairman John Blum and Mayor George Gaulrapp welcomed the veterans and thanked the Illinois Department of Employment Security for hosting the event.

John Blum, as you may know, is a Captain with United Airlines, flying internationally. Recently, as passengers boarded his aircraft in Frankfort, Germany, en route to the United States he noted eight marines in their dress uniforms in the cabin and walked back to thank them for their service, as he was sure they were on their way home after completing their combat tours of duty in Afghanistan or Iraq. At the Tuesday event, the seasoned Captain choked up as he spoke about discovering that each marine on the plane was escorting home a fallen marine in the cargo hold of his aircraft. A movie that I encourage everyone to watch, "Taking Chance", is the true story of a fallen hero and the fellow serviceman who escorts him on his final journey home. Just make sure you have a box of tissue handy; you'll need it.

The men and women fighting for our country deserve everyone's utmost appreciation and respect whether or not you support the war efforts in the Middle East. The recent funeral for Private First Class Devin Michel in Stockton caught the essence of a community thanking a fallen hero for the second time in as many years. The Illinois House of Representatives will pay tribute to Devin when we return in January and it is my prayer that his family will be able to join us.

"Upside Down" is a term used in the auto loan industry to describe someone who owes significantly more on their car than its worth. The great State of Illinois is "upside down", owing far more than our income can sustain. The anger and frustration of taxpaying families across the

state grows daily. The calls and e-mails to our office keep coming, demanding a fix. Many of you rely on state funding to local agencies, and it is the state's obligation to pay you. The number of agencies and organizations waiting more than 180 days for payment from the state is staggering. "You better fix it, Sacia, or we'll throw you out." Please believe me when I say that if I thought my leaving would fix the problem, I'd be long gone. The fact is that Illinois has a systemic problem of spending far more than we can afford. No, I will not be a part of raising your taxes. The "tax and spend" culture in this state must end.

One young lady that I've known and respected for years writes "...I am sharing this as a warning as well as a suggestion....we want to know that Springfield knows that we exist and we will no longer be patient and allow the abuses of non-payment." Yes, we know you exist, along with thousands of others needing the support of the state. Yes, I am committed to fixing it, but until we address such programs as providing free rides on mass transit for seniors who can more than afford to pay (to name just one of many), I'll remain prepared to negotiate.

As always, you can reach me, Sally or Barb at 815/232-0774 or e-mail us at jimsacia@aeroinc.net. You can also visit my website at www.jimsacia.com. It's always a pleasure to hear from you.