Written by Annie Thompson
Tuesday, 15 January 2013 15:56

GRANITE CITY – Lt. Governor Sheila Simon will host two public meetings tomorrow at Southwestern Illinois College (SWIC) that focus on military base retention and improving quality of life in rural areas in Illinois.

Simon is chair of the Interagency Military Base Support and Economic Development Committee (IMBSEDC), which coordinates the state's activities and communications relating to current and former military bases in Illinois. The committee is expected to urge new members of Illinois' Congressional delegation to join a federal Defense Communities Caucus that is tasked with working to protect military installations and surrounding communities nationwide.

"As the federal budget is considered, we must keep in mind the value that our defense communities bring to our local economies and work to ensure that they remain strong and efficient to meet our state and country's needs," said Lt. Governor Sheila Simon.

Simon also chairs the Governor's Rural Affairs Council (GRAC). GRAC members will hear the latest figures on a grant program designed to increase food stamp purchases at farmers' markets and hear from a working group focused on improving emergency medical response in rural areas.

The military base committee and rural affairs council hold quarterly meetings across the state and selected SWIC for its proximity to Scott Air Force Base.

**Wednesday, January 16**

**EVENT**: IMBSEDC meeting

**TIME**: 11:30 a.m.

**PLACE**: Southwestern Illinois College – Sam Wolf Granite City campus, Wilmsmeyer Room, 4950 Maryville Road, Granite City