

New Laws Strengthen Local Efforts to Fight Drug Crime, Gang Violence

ELGIN – August 18, 2011. As part of his agenda to protect communities and strengthen law enforcement throughout Illinois, Governor Pat Quinn today signed legislation to boost local efforts to fight drug dealing and prevent gang violence. House Bill 1258 allows law enforcement to recover funds spent during the course of a drug investigation, and House Bill 3033 will boost local governments' efforts to attain federal grants for gang prevention and intervention.

“Every community in Illinois deserves the highest level of public safety, and law enforcement must have the tools to prevent, investigate and fight crime,” Governor Quinn said. “These new laws help ensure that police departments throughout our state have the resources they need to fight drug and gang activity.”

Local law enforcement agencies throughout Illinois spend significant funds each year to investigate drug crime and make drug-related arrests. House Bill 1258, sponsored by Rep. Keith Farnham (D-Elgin) and Sen. Mike Noland (D-Elgin), ensures that the local law enforcement agencies receive restitution from those convicted of drug crimes for investigation and response costs, including funds needed to clean up after drug busts.

Some police agencies had been forced to stop undercover work and other aggressive anti-drug enforcement measures after the loss of federal funding to decontaminate shuttered methamphetamine production labs drove up costs. Under the new law, defendants found guilty of Unlawful Delivery of a Controlled Substance or an associated charge would face mandatory, court-imposed restitution and a fine as part of sentencing. The new law mirrors the existing DUI /Accident Personnel Time Report, which allows the agency to recover the funds paid to their personnel while investigating a DUI crash.

“Illegal drugs cost our law enforcement agencies thousands of dollars each year to investigate and secure controlled substance manufacturing sites,” Sen. Noland said. “Our emergency response services should not bear those expenses, nor should Illinois taxpayers. It is time for convicted drug dealers to pay restitution for the work and materials that go into gathering evidence and securing sites left behind by manufacturing controlled substances. I am grateful to Governor Quinn for signing this bill, and to Elgin Mayor Kaptain and police officials who have worked with us to make this possible.”

Governor Quinn Signs Legislation to Deter Crime and Improve Public Safety Throughout Illinois

Written by Andrew Mason
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House Bill 3033, also sponsored by Rep. Farnham and Sen. Noland, allows the Illinois Criminal Justice Authority to help train local governments to identify and win grants for gang violence prevention programs.

Both laws take effect Jan. 1.

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