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Fine Ethics Bill Finds Way To State House Floor

Glenview State Rep's Bill Brings Accountability To Political Appointees In Wake Of Metra, NF Sanitary Dist. Scandals



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Another legislative session has begun and State Rep. Laura Fine (D-17th), whose district includes much of Glenview, has been hard at work on ethics legislation in part inspired by the troubles at Metra.

A bill Fine introduced in the last legislative session that was signed into law in August mandated that all officials appointed by a county board, or by a county board president or chairman, shall abide by local ethics laws and be held accountable to the county's ethics officer or inspector general.

An amendment to that bill closing a gap in what officials were covered, was filed by Fine last month. The bill made its way out of two committees and is on its way to the full house floor.

Fine said the August bill was inspired by a scandal involving allegations that Northfield Sanitary District officials were over paying themselves.

The amendment covers other officials appointed by members of county board committees.

One of those committees of suburban Cook County commissioners appoints members of Metra's governing board.

Metra board members faced widespread criticism for approving a generous severance package for former Metra Executive Director Alex Clifford.

Reports said Clifford said he was pushed as Metra director out for resisting calls for patronage hiring from those connected to powerful State House Speaker Michael Madigan.

Calls abounded for resignations of Metra board members, but legally, county commissioners said while they had the power of appointment they did not have the authority to remove Metra board members.

After the Metra scandal broke, Fine said Cook County Commissioner Gregg Goslin (R-14th) contacted her suggesting she take her August ethics bill one step further.

Fine said the January bill passed both House rules and state and local government committees on unanimous votes.

State Sen. Daniel Biss (D-9th), who also represents a large part of Glenview, sponsored Fine's August ethics bill in the Senate. Fine said she is unsure if Biss would sponsor the current bill in the senate or not.

Fine said other legislation she is working on includes a bill to standardize prescription forms doctors submit to insurance companies for pre-approval before prescribing medications to patents. That bill would also require insurers to give doctors a yes or no answer within 72 hours of submittal.

Fine is also working on legislation to allow schools to more easily intervene in cases of cyber (Internet and social media) bullying.

Posted in [News](#), [Glenview](#) on *Wednesday, February 19, 2014 1:47 pm*.

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