

Press Release

May 27th, 2008

Let's talk about transparency. When is the last time you heard of anything going on in your County government? Were you even aware of who your representatives were in Wheaton? Certainly if you follow the local newspapers, you ought to have at least heard about the recent budget crisis, or the tabled stormwater fee proposal. But what I find, more often than not, is the people I speak to at the grocery store or out on the street were not even aware they had a County government.

What you read in the papers is not enough. Politicians can take sides or make hay on issues that, all too often, you were totally unaware of. The aim of democracy, from Washington to Springfield to Wheaton, should be consensus. And I'd even go a step further. I believe it is the responsibility of every elected official to supply his or her constituents with the most information they can about the issues they face in government. What we have right now, at all levels of government, is a crippling disconnect between the elected officials and the people they serve. Ask anyone on the street who their local city councilman is, and odds are they won't know. Ask the average city councilman what the opinion of their constituents is on a specific issue, and they probably will reiterate their own position, not the truth. Government's effectiveness decreases as this disconnect increases. The average citizen has far too much personal business on his or her plate to worry about; gathering information on their local officials and the issues they face is just an added burden. It is up to the officials themselves to seek out every resident, and give them that information. That, I feel, is their duty.

And it will be my duty, if I am elected to represent District 5 of DuPage County. My fellow residents will see every move I make in a self-authored newsletter, available via email or post. I will come to them once every month in a town hall meeting, addressing County issues. I will report the situation to them, gather their opinions, and work hard to build consensus – which I will then represent on the Board. If you visit our County website, you can find a lot of information, but most of it is swathed in legalese. I am willing to wade through the mess, translate and summarize it, and provide the bottom line to the people I serve. My email address, P.O. Box, and office phone number will all be readily available. The only way to increase the effectiveness of our government is to increase the population's interest in government, and I am willing to work to generate that interest.