



Illinois Ethics Matters

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Honesty, Integrity, Service

A newsletter from the Office of Executive Inspector General for the Agencies
of the Illinois Governor

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Recent News

Recent public disclosures of OEIG investigative reports include:

- **In re: Tyrone Crider, 12-02289**, involved a RTA board member who engaged in conflicts of interest. Rev. Crider resigned his board seat prior to completion of the investigation.
- **In re: Angel Zapata, 12-00848**, involved a CTA bus operator who improperly engaged in secondary employment while taking FMLA leave. Mr. Zapata was discharged.
- **In re: Elizabeth Sarmiento, Daniel Ojeda, and Yazmin Cruz, 11-00952**, involved DHS employees who failed to comply with *Rutan* hiring practices. The employees were disciplined.

In other news, the OEIG is pleased to announce several changes to its staff:

- **Daniel Hurtado** was appointed general counsel effective March 1, 2014.
- **Christine Benavente** was appointed legislative assistant inspector general effective March 1, 2014, and will function as the OEIG's legislative liaison and as an assistant inspector general.
- **Claudia Ortega** and **Kenneth Veach** joined the OEIG on March 10, 2014 as investigative auditors in the Regional Transit Board Division.

Public Transit Task Force Seeks Reforms

In a March 17, 2014 statement to the Northeastern Illinois Transit Task Force, Executive Inspector General Ricardo Meza made recommendations to address challenges to OEIG efforts to investigate waste, fraud, and abuse at the RTA, CTA, Metra and Pace. In summary, since the OEIG was granted jurisdiction over the transit boards effective July 1, 2011, the RTA has questioned the OEIG's authority to hire auditors and asked the General Assembly to cut the OEIG's budget.

Mr. Meza recommended that the Ethics Act be amended to permit the OEIG to seek an immediate independent review in instances where the OEIG disputes an agency or transit board's:

- assertion of attorney-client privilege to withhold information from the OEIG; or
- request to have an agency attorney represent witnesses in OEIG investigative interviews in circumstances where the OEIG believes that attorney is legally precluded from doing so because he or she is involved in the matter under investigation.

The OEIG remains committed to independently investigating allegations of misconduct by those under its jurisdiction, including the transit boards. EIG Meza's complete statement is available on our website.

Representative Fred Crespo Introduces Two Ethics Bills



State Rep. Fred Crespo, of the 44th District, has introduced two bills which would amend the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act:

- House Bill 4746 would provide for the mandatory public disclosure of investigative reports revealing the loss of \$5,000 or more in public funds; and
- House Bill 4747 would permit the executive inspector general to notify the appropriate State agency head when an investigation reveals risk to public safety or is in the best interest of the State.

The OEIG is supportive of efforts that promote the integrity of government, in these instances, by increasing transparency and addressing public safety issues. The OEIG intends to seek support for both bills in Springfield.

Christine Benavente
Legislative Assistant Inspector General

Calendar of Events: *March 24 & 27, 2014:* Investigators Noel and Brandenburg will attend Excel training; *April 1, 2014:* Various EIG staff will attend the EEC's annual ethics officer conference; *April 23, 2014:* Legislative AIG Benavente will attend ACFE Legal Elements of Fraud Examination training; and *April 24, 2014:* Investigator Chan will attend a seminar for law enforcement relating to social media.