

Senator Dan Duffy will not run for a third term in 2016

Duffy will lead by example and impose term limits on himself

LAKE BARRINGTON, Illinois – State Senator Dan Duffy announced that he will not seek re-election in the 26th District. Duffy was first elected to the Senate in 2008 and was overwhelmingly re-elected in 2012.

“I have always believed that public service should be a duty, not a career. As a consistent term limits advocate, I have repeatedly stated that two terms or eight years in each elected position is enough. If serving eight years in the Illinois General Assembly was good enough for Abraham Lincoln, it is good enough for me,” Duffy said. “I am very blessed and honored to serve the best people in the greatest state in America. I have enjoyed these two terms in office but will not seek a third term to the state Senate.” Duffy’s current term will expire in January of 2017.

Duffy’s bold approach to Springfield’s status quo was evident during his first week in office when, during former Governor Rod Blagojevich’s impeachment tribunal, he called out legislators on both sides of the aisle for enabling Blagojevich. President John Cullerton’s first interaction with Duffy was when he publicly punished Duffy on the Senate floor and moved his parking space, away from the Capitol door, for speaking out so candidly during the Blagojevich trial.

Duffy has consistently worked to encourage job growth, fight corruption and keep taxes low. He is an unwavering fiscal conservative who passionately opposed tax and fee increases. His main objective while in office was to help taxpayers and small businesses by stopping or killing bad legislation, not adding more regulation to an already overtaxed, over-regulated state.

Duffy has crossed racial barriers and broke down traditional stereotypes by traveling outside his district to lead his “Barbershop Tours” through underserved African American communities. Each tour included spontaneous town hall style meetings at neighborhood barbershops to discuss key issues that impact the Black community. Duffy’s goal has been to solve problems and encourage a productive urban dialogue between Republicans and African Americans.

Among other instances, Duffy turned heads within the Republican establishment when he co-sponsored the Death Penalty Repeal bill with Sen. Kwame Raoul, pushed for school choice with former Senator James Meeks, fought continuously against the abusive Red Light Camera system that has enriched local municipalities, and when he was the first legislator to come out in support of an unknown candidate for governor, Bruce Rauner, over three of his Republican colleagues.

“I work for the people of Illinois and vote on issues that impact the entire state, not just my district. I think it is important for legislators to get outside of their comfort zone, leave their district and find out what is going on in other parts of the state,” said Duffy. “I have come to realize that most of us in Illinois share the same fears and concerns. It is how we address those concerns that is critical to our state’s success.”

Innovative Legislator

Senator Duffy relied on his past business experience to develop innovative strategies to communicate with citizens from across the state. “When I first took office, I was alarmed by how many people were unaware of what was actually happening at the Capitol. I made it my mission to inform citizens about Speaker Mike Madigan and the political process that has bankrupted our state,” Duffy said. In an effort to fulfill that mission, Duffy started traveling the state giving a presentation that he calls, “Springfield 101.” In the hour long presentation, Duffy guides voters through the entire legislative process and describes, in detail, behind the scenes political maneuvering that happens on a daily basis in Springfield. He also started “Talk 2 Me Tuesdays” to try and encourage constituents to just walk in to his district office on Tuesday afternoons, without an appointment, to discuss issues. Since his first day in office, Duffy has always personally answered his emails and has met with every constituent who has requested a meeting.

Duffy has arguably developed the most effective digital strategy in the Illinois General Assembly. Through the use of Facebook and email, he communicates directly with residents from across the entire state. He often uses comments from his Facebook friends during Senate floor debate and consistently utilizes Facebook to keep people up-to-date with the latest legislative initiatives. Duffy often reaches over 300,000 people with a single message on Facebook. Communicating through digital sources saves the taxpayers money because the services are free for the state and do not rely on using glossy mailers or expensive postage. In fiscal year 2014 and fiscal year 2015, Senator Duffy cut his Senate office budget by over 35 percent and returned that money to the taxpayers.

Time to Move On

Duffy has been a trailblazer who has not been afraid to make decisions that will put him at odds with other lawmakers. He entered office in 2009, when legislative college scholarships were in full swing. He learned how legislators were able to skate around the spirit of the law and hand out college scholarships to top donors. He spoke out about this corrupt process and was chastised by other lawmakers. At the time, not many legislators were interested in eliminating their scholarships. Duffy did not wait for legislation to prohibit the process, instead, he simply eliminated them from his office. Eventually, due to public outcry, the legislative college scholarship perk was eliminated for all legislators.

Duffy is proud of his efforts to help elect Governor Bruce Rauner. Duffy and Rauner have known each other for many years. Duffy took candidate Rauner on his Barbershop Tour and he formally introduced legislators to Rauner at the State House Inn during Rauner’s first organized meeting with Republican lawmakers in Springfield. Duffy was the first legislator to publicly endorse Bruce Rauner for governor and worked daily during his campaign to help get him elected. “Governor Rauner is good for Illinois. Like taking a pain pill, it is not always easy to accept something that is good for you and necessary for a cure. Gov. Rauner did not create any of the problems that we have in Illinois, but he will surely help us solve them. We are all going

to need to make some sacrifices. It is time we take our medicine and do what it takes to get this state back on track,” Duffy said. “Now that Rauner is in office, I feel much more comfortable leaving the Senate. Rauner will not back down from Madigan and will continue to focus on all the same issues I have fought for over the years.”

Regarding his retirement, Duffy said, “I will treasure the relationships I have developed while in the state Senate and carry the wonderful memories I have made with me for the rest of my life. I am so blessed to have had this opportunity to serve the people of Illinois,” Duffy said. “I will now review all of my options for the future and take it one day at a time.”

By working during the days and studying at nights for the past two years, Duffy has graduated from The George Washington University with a Master’s degree in Political Management. While in office, Duffy was honored with the “Champion of Free Enterprise” award by the Illinois Chamber of Commerce, the “Guardian of Small Business” award by the National Federation of Independent Business and the “Defender of Liberty” award by the American Conservative Union.