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# Lawmakers vote to slash Medicaid

### Bill includes \$1.3 billion in service cuts; cigarette tax increase still up in the air

From staff and wire reports

SPRINGFIELD — Hundreds of thousands of people would see their health care cut back or even eliminated under legislation approved Thursday by the Illinois House and Senate in a desperate attempt to repair the state's crumbling budget.

The Medicaid cuts include ending a prescription drug program for senior citizens, halting two programs that provide health insurance for about 35,000 people and restricting access to services from heart bypass operations to wheelchair repairs.

Opponents said the cuts will mean

**INSIDE:** GOP senators criticize Democrats' budget, call Murray Center money bait, **PAGE B1**

suffering and death for some of the 2.7 million people who get care under Medicaid.

"I'm begging you, representative, for the life of the people who are going to die. I'm begging you," Rep. Mary Flowers, D-Chicago, said to the measure's sponsor.

Rep. Sara Feigenholtz, D-Chicago, said the Medicaid program will fall apart without fast action. Helping the

state's poor in the long run requires cutting back now, she said.

"I know it seems ironic, but this is the only way we can accomplish that," Feigenholtz said.

Rep. Dwight Kay, R-Glen Carbon, said during discussion of the bill that Illinois will be "penniless" if it doesn't reform Medicaid.

"If we don't do anything, we will be out of business," Kay said. "We are standing in a bread line ... asking for toast, and we can't afford the toast."

Rep. John Cavaletto, R-Salem, said legislators had to make some painful

Please see **MEDICAID, A2**

#### HOW LOCAL LEGISLATORS VOTED

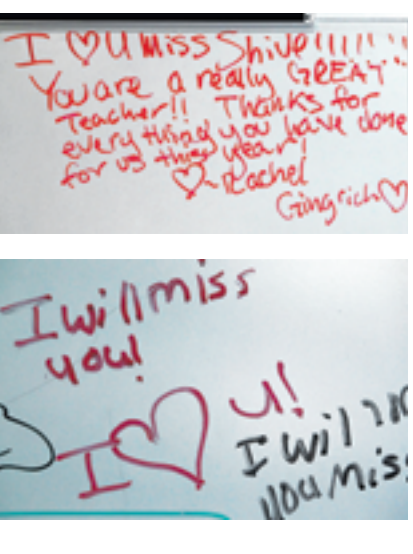
|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Rep. Dan Beiser, D-Alton:</b><br>Yes             | <b>Rep. Scott Penny, D-Fairmont City:</b> Yes  |
| <b>Rep. John Cavaletto, R-Salem:</b> Yes            | <b>Sen. James Clayborne, D-Bellefonte:</b> No  |
| <b>Rep. Jerry Costello II, D-Smithton:</b> Yes      | <b>Sen. Bill Haine, D-Alton:</b> Yes           |
| <b>Rep. Paul Evans, R-O'Fallon:</b> Yes             | <b>Sen. John O. Jones, R-Mount Vernon:</b> Yes |
| <b>Rep. Eddie Lee Jackson, D-East St. Louis:</b> No | <b>Sen. Dave Luechtefeld, R-Okawville:</b> Yes |
| <b>Rep. Dwight Kay, R-Glen Carbon:</b> Yes          | <b>Sen. Kyle McCarter, R-Lebanon:</b> Yes      |

## LAST DAY OF SCHOOL



Ellen Shibe, a sixth-grade language arts teacher at Wolf Branch Middle School in Swansea, shares laughs while getting a group hug from her students as they are dismissed for the summer Thursday. Students wrote messages on a large card showing their appreciation for Shibe. For more photos from the last day of school, see a gallery at [bnd.com](http://bnd.com).

STEVE NAGY/News-Democrat



## Belleville eyes upgrade for police station

City brings in more sales tax money

By LAURA GIRRESCH  
News-Democrat



**Should Belleville upgrade its police facilities?**

Tell us what you think online.

BELLEVILLE — If sales tax revenue continues to rise, Mayor Mark Eckert says, the city may get a revamped police headquarters facility.

The fiscal year started May 1, and sales tax income has been steadily increasing. If it stays that way for the next few months, the mayor says he'll likely ask the City Council to hire an architect to study options for the facility.

City leaders several years ago considered the possibility of building a new station, but at the time, they thought they had a shot at a grant to help them with the project, which they estimated would cost up to \$15 million.

Now, Eckert said, federal grants are hard to come by. While he'd love to build a new facility somewhere downtown, he doesn't foresee the city taking on more

than a renovation. But even that is long overdue.

Police Chief William Clay said he's all for improvements. He'd prefer a new building, but a remodel would be better than nothing.

"We are in desperate need of a new facility or some kind of remodel plan," he said.

The station was built in 1957, when there were only about 40 officers on staff. Now, the department has outgrown the facility with 82 officers, and Eckert and Clay say the building is not safe.

Officers bring prisoners in through the basement, and then they have to climb three flights of stairs to the second floor to

Please see **POLICE, A2**

## Swansea fire chief will keep his job

Age discrimination case to be dismissed

By JACQUELINE LEE  
News-Democrat



McGuire

SWANSEA — Fire Chief John McGuire signed a settlement with the village Tuesday in which he agrees to drop an age discrimination complaint, accept a pay cut and adhere to new job requirements.

His reappointment was contingent on these agreements.

Mayor Jim Rauckman said Wednesday all parties have signed the agreement. He intends to reappoint McGuire at the next Village Board meeting on June 4.

In early April, the village reduced the 2012-13 budget to cut the Fire Department from two paid, full-time firefighters to one.

Officials said McGuire would not be reappointed, citing job performance and budgetary reasons, and they would promote deputy fire chief Christopher Tell.

McGuire, 49, said he was not being reappointed because of his age.

According to the settlement, McGuire will earn \$57,500 retroactive to May 1 and he will get health and pension benefits. His salary was \$65,000 last year.

Part of McGuire's salary will be donated by two resi-

Please see **CHIEF, A2**

## 'We have to stop falling into the trap' of violence

Trayvon Martin's father will return to hometown

By CAROLYN P. SMITH  
News-Democrat



Trayvon Martin

EAST ST. LOUIS — Gun violence in the metro-east and across the country is leaving too many young lives and claiming behind grieving loved ones. It has to stop. This is the message that Tracy Martin, the father of Trayvon Martin is bringing to the East St. Louis community Friday when he speaks to young people at a Stop the Violence rally.

Trayvon's mother, Sybrina Fulton, and his older brother also will speak at

the rally. The event will be at noon at North End Missionary Baptist Church, 463 N. 88th St., in East St. Louis.

Trayvon Martin was 16 when he was shot and killed by a Neighborhood Watch security guard, George Zimmerman, in late February in Sanford, Fla., after the two scuffled. Martin was not armed. All he had on his person was a bag of Skittles and a can of iced tea, which he had just purchased at a local

Please see **TRAYVON, A2**



#### TRAYVON MARTIN'S PARENTS TO SPEAK IN EAST ST. LOUIS

Sybrina Fulton and Tracy Martin, the parents of Trayvon Martin, will talk about gun violence during a visit to East St. Louis. Trayvon was shot to death Feb. 26 in Florida.

**When:** Noon today

**Where:** North End Missionary Baptist Church, 463 N. 88th St., East St. Louis

