

About Mel Thillens



For the 55th District. For Illinois.

A good way to tell you a little bit about myself is to bring you back to the beginning of my career. I was ten years old, and my dad offered me a job at Thillens Stadium, the little league ballpark my family ran. The way it worked, my dad would sell me 50 cent boxes of popcorn for 40 cents. I would sell them in the bleachers, and keep the extra dime as my pay. On my first day, I started with a



\$20 bank. I worked for hours happily selling box after box, but at the end of the day I had \$2 less than I started with. I went to my dad, tears in my eyes, explaining that I had somehow lost money. "Well, you had better learn to balance your cash," he said. I quickly did, and it wasn't long before I was making money, which got me promoted to lining the fields, picking up trash, and eventually running courier routes for our armored car company and today, leading the operation.

But what was my dad teaching me back then? What is it we all learn from our parents? To work hard. To value a dollar. To confront problems and solve them. To not spend what we don't have. To watch your money. To respect people. These are the values we all learn as kids, but that isn't how the politicians in Springfield act.

Michael Madigan and Marty Moylan will tell you that the 67% "temporary" income tax increase the Democrats put on us was needed so we could pay the state's outstanding bills, but now there are more unpaid bills than there were before the tax increase. Moylan and Madigan will tell you they need a new escalating "progressive" tax rate to pay for unfunded pensions, when it was Moylan and Madigan who spent the money that was supposed to fund them. Moylan and Madigan will continue to spend the money they don't have, while each man, woman and child in Cook County is currently on the hook for \$84,000 in local government debt. It's time we told Moylan and Madigan that we respect our children too much to hand them a bill for 84 grand. . . . I mean, when I coach my boys, Max and Nathan, and the rest of their friends on the football field, I teach them that if they work hard, and practice, and plan, and do their best, they will succeed. I figure if they can learn that on the football field, they will carry it with them through life.

But how can they succeed when our politicians are hitting them with an \$84,000 penalty before the ball is even snapped?

Like you I'm angry at what is coming out of Springfield. So many of these politicians are crooks or incompetent or both. We need to tell Moylan and Madigan that we respect the taxpayers, we respect the small business owners, we respect the people of our community too much to fall so short on promises while bleeding them dry.

My wife, Stephanie, will tell you I have my hand in the air too often. This community is so great because we all volunteer so much. Like all of us, I'm always doing something. I'm at Park Board budget meetings, or running around the Taste of Park Ridge making sure everything goes as planned, or dangling from trees helping get the lights up for Christmas, or figuring out how we can save the eleven and a half acres at the Youth Campus for us all to use as a park. Like you, I care enough that when I see something my community needs, I put my hand in the air. . . . But Marty Moylan puts his finger in the wind.

All of the lifelong politicians that head to Springfield stick their finger in the wind, judging the best way to keep themselves and their buddies in control of our pocketbooks. Crain's Chicago Business puts out a list of businesses and organizations that employ the most people in the Chicago area. In 2013 five of the six largest employers are government entities. That is shameful coming from a state that once boasted one of the top business economies in the nation and was home to some of the largest employers that ever existed. It is unsustainable, and it is a direct result of politicians like Marty Moylan spending our tax money on jobs for themselves and their buddies. Look no further than Madigan's Metra scandal to find the patronage black holes that our tax dollars fall into.

Like you, I've had enough. Enough of these politicians blowing the budget. Enough of the endless tax increases. Enough of Madigan's stranglehold on our economy. Every nine minutes someone moves out of Illinois, leaves to one of 48 states with a better employment rate. I don't want my kids to have to move away to find a job. I don't want our economy to follow the same death spiral as Detroit.

You see the problem in Springfield. It is almost unfathomable the situation they have put us in. You see that the system is broken and the state is broke. You see what it is doing to our community. And you see what it will do to our children. I see it too. . . . and I'm putting my hand in the air

Please vote for me, Mel Thillens as your State Representative, and be proud of Illinois again.