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Press Release

Illinois State Representative Michael J. Zalewski has been selected to receive the 2017 Robert R. McClarren Legislative Development Award for his dedicated and significant legislative work to benefit libraries in Illinois.

“The Illinois Library Association’s Public Policy Committee and Awards Committee are most honored to present this year’s Robert R. McClarren Legislative Development Award to Illinois State Representative Mike Zalewski”, said David J. Seleb, ILA’s Public Policy Committee Immediate Past Chairperson and Executive Director of the Oak Park Public Library. “Representative Zalewski has been a tremendous advocate to both individual libraries within Illinois as well as to the Illinois Library Association and its initiatives. Our Association looks forward to presenting the award to the Representative at its annual conference scheduled for October 2017 in Tinley Park, Illinois,” Seleb added.

In early 2016, Representative Zalewski came to the aid of the Brookfield Library when, as a Village Library, it needed debt extension legislation passed by the General Assembly to place a bond question on the November 8, 2016 General Election ballot. Representative Zalewski jumped on board and went to bat for the Library, exerting his influence and persuading his fellow legislators to co-sponsor the bill and ultimately to pass it. Thanks to Representative Zalewski’s efforts, Senate Bill 2469 was signed into law by Illinois Governor Rauner on August 8, 2016 and allows Village Libraries, until 2020, to pursue bonds without affecting the debt capacities of their respective Villages.

In addition to this local Library example, there are numerous occasions on which Representative Zalewski has advocated for libraries on a statewide basis. Most recently, the Illinois Library Association worked with Representative Zalewski in 2016 to advance and pass Senate Bill 399 that amended the Liquor Control Act to permit district Libraries in Illinois to serve alcohol during educational or cultural events. Also noteworthy is his work on House Bill 547 to increase the public bidding threshold for libraries from \$20,000 to \$25,000.

The Robert R. McClarren Legislative Development Award will be presented at the Awards Luncheon held on Tuesday, October 10, during the 2017 Illinois Library Association Annual Conference in Tinley Park.

For further information, contact the Illinois Library Association.

For Immediate Release