



Joe  
Sosnowski

## Daily Chronicle questionnaire: Joe Sosnowski

**Primary election:** 69th District State Representative (Republican)

**Age:** 32

**Bio:** Grew up in Carol Stream; attended Northern Illinois University; former City of DeKalb alderman; elected Rockford alderman in 2005 and 2009; lives in Rockford with wife, Roxanne, and three children; works for Rockford Christian Schools; member of Holy Family Catholic Church; member of the regional board of Children's Home and Aid.

### Why are you seeking the office?

Being a state representative is about more than answering calls from constituents. It is about taking the lead on policies that will promote our region, improve the state's financial well-being, and pushing for real systematic change. My wife Roxanne and I, as parents of three young children, must make decisions everyday about our priorities and how to best provide a strong foundation for our children. Our goal is simple: make sure our kids have a bright future with freedom and opportunity to succeed. As I look at what is happening in Washington and Springfield, it is critical that we refocus our priorities. If we don't make real changes, we will allow an unsustainable state government to bankrupt us. We need to fix our state budget now. We need to improve our efforts to grow local businesses, and we need to improve our educational systems to produce better students.

### What distinguishes you from the other candidates in this primary?

I have extensive background working in the private sector in commercial and residential property management, sales, and marketing. Currently, I work in facility planning and fundraising for Rockford Christian Schools. In addition to my private sector experience, I have been an alderman in DeKalb and Rockford. My unique public and private experience allows me to take a common sense business approach to government. As a state representative, I will continue to demand accountability to the voters, quality in government services, improved performance, and a reduction in government spending. I have been successful working on these issues in city government, and I am confident that I can be successful in Springfield as we reprioritize our approach to government.

### How would you fix the state's budget crisis?

All three ratings agencies (Standard and Poor's, Fitch, and Moody's) are downgrading Illinois. The state is borrowing billions to stay afloat. Census data shows about 240,000 more Illinoisans lived in poverty in 2008, compared to 2000, yet there are over 4,000 former state employees receiving pensions over \$100,000 per year. To fix these problems, we need to take a common sense approach and reduce spending. In a time when state revenues are decreasing, we must decrease spending to be fiscally prudent. We need to streamline state government, improve accountability, reduce wasteful spending, increase efficiency through technology, and reduce fraud in major budget areas such as Medicare. We also need to move to a system of "health care" rather than "sick care." A health system that requires personal responsibility and encourages people to take better care of their health will reduce costs to state and local governments.

### Do you support a constitutional amendment to allow the recall of a governor by citizen initiative?

Yes. I support a recall amendment.

### What is the biggest issue facing the 69th District and how would you address it in Springfield?

In 2008, Illinois ranked 44th in US News and World Report for the cost of doing business in the state (tax burden, utilities,

worker's compensation insurance, etc.). We are 44th in the quality of our workforce (educational attainment), and 35th in business friendliness when looking at legal and regulatory framework. Finally, we rank 25th in quality of education. The state's approach to jobs, schools and spending is hurting our overall economy. We need to enhance and expand our economic development efforts to market our region to the world in order to help local companies increase sales and increase jobs. In addition to this focus, we need to improve and maintain our infrastructure to retain and attract new investment. We also need to invest in our future by improving education. We need to take innovative approaches to education to make sure that all children are being given a chance to succeed.