

DURBIN OVERSEES THE AMERICAN JOB ACT ASSISTING DECATUR, ILLINOIS



The infrastructure modernization is critical to the employment prospects in Decatur, Illinois. Senator Dick Durbin stands behind this claim 100 percent because Illinois' unemployment rate is not good. It currently stands at 10 percent, which is higher than the national 9.1 percent. According to Senator Durbin, "should the school modernization portion of the "American Jobs Act" pass it would result in \$1.1 billion in funds to modernize Illinois schools and result in as many as 145,000 jobs." Senator Durbin, recently speaking at the Johns Hill Magnet School in Decatur, believes more emphasis needs to be placed on Decatur's public schools because the schools are "in need of multiple forms of physical modernization including air conditioning and security systems." Since the "American Jobs Act" failed to win passage, Senator Durbin is now supporting efforts to pass individual portions of the bill. These portions "could potentially assist the unemployed throughout the U.S. and Illinois. He is highly supportive of modernization of transportation systems, infrastructures development, and school plant modernization as a vehicle toward economic investment, job creation, the growth of small businesses and the further development of Illinois tourism." Attention is being brought to the costly repairs to schools as Senator Durbin is solely focusing addressing this problem to the public. Speaking at Johns Hill Magnet School he said, the school "lacked proper post-Columbine security measures, does not meet modern accessibility standards, as their school has many stairways but no elevators, and is challenged by asbestos-containing heating pipes, floor and ceiling tiles which poses a danger to students and staff if not managed properly and adds substantial time and expense to many small repairs. The school also lacks air conditioning, which resulted in temperatures rising to over 100 degrees or higher in some classrooms during the early weeks of the school year. Approximately 70 percent of schools in the Decatur public schools system lack air conditioning and rely on heating systems nearly two decades beyond their expected lifetime." The economic recovery is going at a slow rate nationally and in Illinois, according to the latest economic data from the U.S. Bureau of Statistics and the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDEA). Even though 1,600 jobs were added at the end of September, the recovery for the economy remains unchanged nationwide and in Illinois. According to Jay Rowell, Director of the Illinois Department of Employment Security, "Consumer confidence drives the national economy and affects our economic growth here in Illinois, so these are not surprising figures. Job growth at this stage in the economic cycle is often accompanied by a slight increase in the unemployment rate. But a broader confidence must be restored at the national level before individual states will show greater wide-spread growth."

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