

1 AN ACT concerning revenue.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Property Tax Code is amended by changing
5 Sections 15-170 and 15-172 as follows:

6 (35 ILCS 200/15-170)

7 Sec. 15-170. Senior Citizens Homestead Exemption. An
8 annual homestead exemption limited, except as described here
9 with relation to cooperatives or life care facilities, to a
10 maximum reduction set forth below from the property's value, as
11 equalized or assessed by the Department, is granted for
12 property that is occupied as a residence by a person 65 years
13 of age or older who is liable for paying real estate taxes on
14 the property and is an owner of record of the property or has a
15 legal or equitable interest therein as evidenced by a written
16 instrument, except for a leasehold interest, other than a
17 leasehold interest of land on which a single family residence
18 is located, which is occupied as a residence by a person 65
19 years or older who has an ownership interest therein, legal,
20 equitable or as a lessee, and on which he or she is liable for
21 the payment of property taxes. Before taxable year 2004, the
22 maximum reduction shall be \$2,500 in counties with 3,000,000 or
23 more inhabitants and \$2,000 in all other counties. For taxable

1 years 2004 through 2005, the maximum reduction shall be \$3,000
2 in all counties. For taxable years 2006 and 2007, the maximum
3 reduction shall be \$3,500 and, for taxable years 2008 and
4 thereafter, the maximum reduction is \$4,000 in all counties.

5 For land improved with an apartment building owned and
6 operated as a cooperative, the maximum reduction from the value
7 of the property, as equalized by the Department, shall be
8 multiplied by the number of apartments or units occupied by a
9 person 65 years of age or older who is liable, by contract with
10 the owner or owners of record, for paying property taxes on the
11 property and is an owner of record of a legal or equitable
12 interest in the cooperative apartment building, other than a
13 leasehold interest. For land improved with a life care
14 facility, the maximum reduction from the value of the property,
15 as equalized by the Department, shall be multiplied by the
16 number of apartments or units occupied by persons 65 years of
17 age or older, irrespective of any legal, equitable, or
18 leasehold interest in the facility, who are liable, under a
19 contract with the owner or owners of record of the facility,
20 for paying property taxes on the property. In a cooperative or
21 a life care facility where a homestead exemption has been
22 granted, the cooperative association or the management firm of
23 the cooperative or facility shall credit the savings resulting
24 from that exemption only to the apportioned tax liability of
25 the owner or resident who qualified for the exemption. Any
26 person who willfully refuses to so credit the savings shall be

1 guilty of a Class B misdemeanor. Under this Section and
2 Sections 15-175, 15-176, and 15-177 "life care facility" means
3 a facility as defined in Section 2 of the Life Care Facilities
4 Act, with which the applicant for the homestead exemption has a
5 life care contract as defined in that Act.

6 When a homestead exemption has been granted under this
7 Section and the person qualifying subsequently becomes a
8 resident of a facility licensed under the Assisted Living and
9 Shared Housing Act or the Nursing Home Care Act, the exemption
10 shall continue so long as the residence continues to be
11 occupied by the qualifying person's spouse if the spouse is 65
12 years of age or older, or if the residence remains unoccupied
13 but is still owned by the person qualified for the homestead
14 exemption.

15 A person who will be 65 years of age during the current
16 assessment year shall be eligible to apply for the homestead
17 exemption during that assessment year. Application shall be
18 made during the application period in effect for the county of
19 his residence.

20 Beginning with assessment year 2003, for taxes payable in
21 2004, property that is first occupied as a residence after
22 January 1 of any assessment year by a person who is eligible
23 for the senior citizens homestead exemption under this Section
24 must be granted a pro-rata exemption for the assessment year.
25 The amount of the pro-rata exemption is the exemption allowed
26 in the county under this Section divided by 365 and multiplied

1 by the number of days during the assessment year the property
2 is occupied as a residence by a person eligible for the
3 exemption under this Section. The chief county assessment
4 officer must adopt reasonable procedures to establish
5 eligibility for this pro-rata exemption.

6 The assessor or chief county assessment officer may
7 determine the eligibility of a life care facility to receive
8 the benefits provided by this Section, by affidavit,
9 application, visual inspection, questionnaire or other
10 reasonable methods in order to insure that the tax savings
11 resulting from the exemption are credited by the management
12 firm to the apportioned tax liability of each qualifying
13 resident. The assessor may request reasonable proof that the
14 management firm has so credited the exemption.

15 The chief county assessment officer of each county with
16 less than 3,000,000 inhabitants shall provide to each person
17 allowed a homestead exemption under this Section a form to
18 designate any other person to receive a duplicate of any notice
19 of delinquency in the payment of taxes assessed and levied
20 under this Code on the property of the person receiving the
21 exemption. The duplicate notice shall be in addition to the
22 notice required to be provided to the person receiving the
23 exemption, and shall be given in the manner required by this
24 Code. The person filing the request for the duplicate notice
25 shall pay a fee of \$5 to cover administrative costs to the
26 supervisor of assessments, who shall then file the executed

1 designation with the county collector. Notwithstanding any
2 other provision of this Code to the contrary, the filing of
3 such an executed designation requires the county collector to
4 provide duplicate notices as indicated by the designation. A
5 designation may be rescinded by the person who executed such
6 designation at any time, in the manner and form required by the
7 chief county assessment officer.

8 The assessor or chief county assessment officer may
9 determine the eligibility of residential property to receive
10 the homestead exemption provided by this Section by
11 application, visual inspection, questionnaire or other
12 reasonable methods. The determination shall be made in
13 accordance with guidelines established by the Department.

14 In counties with less than 3,000,000 inhabitants, the
15 county board may by resolution provide that if a person has
16 been granted a homestead exemption under this Section, the
17 person qualifying need not reapply for the exemption.

18 In counties with less than 3,000,000 inhabitants, if the
19 assessor or chief county assessment officer requires annual
20 application for verification of eligibility for an exemption
21 once granted under this Section, the application shall be
22 mailed to the taxpayer.

23 The assessor or chief county assessment officer shall
24 notify each person who qualifies for an exemption under this
25 Section that the person may also qualify for deferral of real
26 estate taxes under the Senior Citizens Real Estate Tax Deferral

1 Act. The notice shall set forth the qualifications needed for
2 deferral of real estate taxes, the address and telephone number
3 of county collector, and a statement that applications for
4 deferral of real estate taxes may be obtained from the county
5 collector.

6 Notwithstanding Sections 6 and 8 of the State Mandates Act,
7 no reimbursement by the State is required for the
8 implementation of any mandate created by this Section.

9 Notwithstanding any other rulemaking authority that may
10 exist, neither the Governor nor any agency or agency head under
11 the jurisdiction of the Governor has any authority to make or
12 promulgate rules to implement or enforce the provisions of this
13 amendatory Act of the 95th General Assembly. If, however, the
14 Governor believes that rules are necessary to implement or
15 enforce the provisions of this amendatory Act of the 95th
16 General Assembly, the Governor may suggest rules to the General
17 Assembly by filing them with the Clerk of the House and the
18 Secretary of the Senate and by requesting that the General
19 Assembly authorize such rulemaking by law, enact those
20 suggested rules into law, or take any other appropriate action
21 in the General Assembly's discretion. Nothing contained in this
22 amendatory Act of the 95th General Assembly shall be
23 interpreted to grant rulemaking authority under any other
24 Illinois statute where such authority is not otherwise
25 explicitly given. For the purposes of this paragraph, "rules"
26 is given the meaning contained in Section 1-70 of the Illinois

1 Administrative Procedure Act, and "agency" and "agency head"
2 are given the meanings contained in Sections 1-20 and 1-25 of
3 the Illinois Administrative Procedure Act to the extent that
4 such definitions apply to agencies or agency heads under the
5 jurisdiction of the Governor.

6 (Source: P.A. 94-794, eff. 5-22-06; 95-644, eff. 10-12-07.)

7 (35 ILCS 200/15-172)

8 Sec. 15-172. Senior Citizens Assessment Freeze Homestead
9 Exemption.

10 (a) This Section may be cited as the Senior Citizens
11 Assessment Freeze Homestead Exemption.

12 (b) As used in this Section:

13 "Applicant" means an individual who has filed an
14 application under this Section.

15 "Base amount" means the base year equalized assessed value
16 of the residence plus the first year's equalized assessed value
17 of any added improvements which increased the assessed value of
18 the residence after the base year.

19 "Base year" means the taxable year prior to the taxable
20 year for which the applicant first qualifies and applies for
21 the exemption provided that in the prior taxable year the
22 property was improved with a permanent structure that was
23 occupied as a residence by the applicant who was liable for
24 paying real property taxes on the property and who was either

25 (i) an owner of record of the property or had legal or

1 equitable interest in the property as evidenced by a written
2 instrument or (ii) had a legal or equitable interest as a
3 lessee in the parcel of property that was single family
4 residence. If in any subsequent taxable year for which the
5 applicant applies and qualifies for the exemption the equalized
6 assessed value of the residence is less than the equalized
7 assessed value in the existing base year (provided that such
8 equalized assessed value is not based on an assessed value that
9 results from a temporary irregularity in the property that
10 reduces the assessed value for one or more taxable years), then
11 that subsequent taxable year shall become the base year until a
12 new base year is established under the terms of this paragraph.
13 For taxable year 1999 only, the Chief County Assessment Officer
14 shall review (i) all taxable years for which the applicant
15 applied and qualified for the exemption and (ii) the existing
16 base year. The assessment officer shall select as the new base
17 year the year with the lowest equalized assessed value. An
18 equalized assessed value that is based on an assessed value
19 that results from a temporary irregularity in the property that
20 reduces the assessed value for one or more taxable years shall
21 not be considered the lowest equalized assessed value. The
22 selected year shall be the base year for taxable year 1999 and
23 thereafter until a new base year is established under the terms
24 of this paragraph.

25 "Chief County Assessment Officer" means the County
26 Assessor or Supervisor of Assessments of the county in which

1 the property is located.

2 "Equalized assessed value" means the assessed value as
3 equalized by the Illinois Department of Revenue.

4 "Household" means the applicant, the spouse of the
5 applicant, and all persons using the residence of the applicant
6 as their principal place of residence.

7 "Household income" means the combined income of the members
8 of a household for the calendar year preceding the taxable
9 year.

10 "Income" has the same meaning as provided in Section 3.07
11 of the Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief
12 and Pharmaceutical Assistance Act, except that, beginning in
13 assessment year 2001, "income" does not include veteran's
14 benefits.

15 "Internal Revenue Code of 1986" means the United States
16 Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or any successor law or laws
17 relating to federal income taxes in effect for the year
18 preceding the taxable year.

19 "Life care facility that qualifies as a cooperative" means
20 a facility as defined in Section 2 of the Life Care Facilities
21 Act.

22 "Maximum income limitation" means:

- 23 (1) \$35,000 prior to taxable year 1999;
24 (2) \$40,000 in taxable years 1999 through 2003;
25 (3) \$45,000 in taxable years 2004 through 2005;
26 (4) \$50,000 in taxable years 2006 and 2007; and

1 (5) \$55,000 in taxable year 2008 and thereafter.

2 "Residence" means the principal dwelling place and
3 appurtenant structures used for residential purposes in this
4 State occupied on January 1 of the taxable year by a household
5 and so much of the surrounding land, constituting the parcel
6 upon which the dwelling place is situated, as is used for
7 residential purposes. If the Chief County Assessment Officer
8 has established a specific legal description for a portion of
9 property constituting the residence, then that portion of
10 property shall be deemed the residence for the purposes of this
11 Section.

12 "Taxable year" means the calendar year during which ad
13 valorem property taxes payable in the next succeeding year are
14 levied.

15 (c) Beginning in taxable year 1994, a senior citizens
16 assessment freeze homestead exemption is granted for real
17 property that is improved with a permanent structure that is
18 occupied as a residence by an applicant who (i) is 65 years of
19 age or older during the taxable year, (ii) has a household
20 income that does not exceed the maximum income limitation,
21 (iii) is liable for paying real property taxes on the property,
22 and (iv) is an owner of record of the property or has a legal or
23 equitable interest in the property as evidenced by a written
24 instrument. This homestead exemption shall also apply to a
25 leasehold interest in a parcel of property improved with a
26 permanent structure that is a single family residence that is

1 occupied as a residence by a person who (i) is 65 years of age
2 or older during the taxable year, (ii) has a household income
3 that does not exceed the maximum income limitation, (iii) has a
4 legal or equitable ownership interest in the property as
5 lessee, and (iv) is liable for the payment of real property
6 taxes on that property.

7 In counties of 3,000,000 or more inhabitants, the amount of
8 the exemption for all taxable years is the equalized assessed
9 value of the residence in the taxable year for which
10 application is made minus the base amount. In all other
11 counties, the amount of the exemption is as follows: (i)
12 through taxable year 2005 and for taxable year 2007 and
13 thereafter, the amount of this exemption shall be the equalized
14 assessed value of the residence in the taxable year for which
15 application is made minus the base amount; and (ii) for taxable
16 year 2006, the amount of the exemption is as follows:

17 (1) For an applicant who has a household income of
18 \$45,000 or less, the amount of the exemption is the
19 equalized assessed value of the residence in the taxable
20 year for which application is made minus the base amount.

21 (2) For an applicant who has a household income
22 exceeding \$45,000 but not exceeding \$46,250, the amount of
23 the exemption is (i) the equalized assessed value of the
24 residence in the taxable year for which application is made
25 minus the base amount (ii) multiplied by 0.8.

26 (3) For an applicant who has a household income

1 exceeding \$46,250 but not exceeding \$47,500, the amount of
2 the exemption is (i) the equalized assessed value of the
3 residence in the taxable year for which application is made
4 minus the base amount (ii) multiplied by 0.6.

5 (4) For an applicant who has a household income
6 exceeding \$47,500 but not exceeding \$48,750, the amount of
7 the exemption is (i) the equalized assessed value of the
8 residence in the taxable year for which application is made
9 minus the base amount (ii) multiplied by 0.4.

10 (5) For an applicant who has a household income
11 exceeding \$48,750 but not exceeding \$50,000, the amount of
12 the exemption is (i) the equalized assessed value of the
13 residence in the taxable year for which application is made
14 minus the base amount (ii) multiplied by 0.2.

15 When the applicant is a surviving spouse of an applicant
16 for a prior year for the same residence for which an exemption
17 under this Section has been granted, the base year and base
18 amount for that residence are the same as for the applicant for
19 the prior year.

20 Each year at the time the assessment books are certified to
21 the County Clerk, the Board of Review or Board of Appeals shall
22 give to the County Clerk a list of the assessed values of
23 improvements on each parcel qualifying for this exemption that
24 were added after the base year for this parcel and that
25 increased the assessed value of the property.

26 In the case of land improved with an apartment building

1 owned and operated as a cooperative or a building that is a
2 life care facility that qualifies as a cooperative, the maximum
3 reduction from the equalized assessed value of the property is
4 limited to the sum of the reductions calculated for each unit
5 occupied as a residence by a person or persons (i) 65 years of
6 age or older, (ii) with a household income that does not exceed
7 the maximum income limitation, (iii) who is liable, by contract
8 with the owner or owners of record, for paying real property
9 taxes on the property, and (iv) who is an owner of record of a
10 legal or equitable interest in the cooperative apartment
11 building, other than a leasehold interest. In the instance of a
12 cooperative where a homestead exemption has been granted under
13 this Section, the cooperative association or its management
14 firm shall credit the savings resulting from that exemption
15 only to the apportioned tax liability of the owner who
16 qualified for the exemption. Any person who willfully refuses
17 to credit that savings to an owner who qualifies for the
18 exemption is guilty of a Class B misdemeanor.

19 When a homestead exemption has been granted under this
20 Section and an applicant then becomes a resident of a facility
21 licensed under the Assisted Living and Shared Housing Act or
22 the Nursing Home Care Act, the exemption shall be granted in
23 subsequent years so long as the residence (i) continues to be
24 occupied by the qualified applicant's spouse or (ii) if
25 remaining unoccupied, is still owned by the qualified applicant
26 for the homestead exemption.

1 Beginning January 1, 1997, when an individual dies who
2 would have qualified for an exemption under this Section, and
3 the surviving spouse does not independently qualify for this
4 exemption because of age, the exemption under this Section
5 shall be granted to the surviving spouse for the taxable year
6 preceding and the taxable year of the death, provided that,
7 except for age, the surviving spouse meets all other
8 qualifications for the granting of this exemption for those
9 years.

10 When married persons maintain separate residences, the
11 exemption provided for in this Section may be claimed by only
12 one of such persons and for only one residence.

13 For taxable year 1994 only, in counties having less than
14 3,000,000 inhabitants, to receive the exemption, a person shall
15 submit an application by February 15, 1995 to the Chief County
16 Assessment Officer of the county in which the property is
17 located. In counties having 3,000,000 or more inhabitants, for
18 taxable year 1994 and all subsequent taxable years, to receive
19 the exemption, a person may submit an application to the Chief
20 County Assessment Officer of the county in which the property
21 is located during such period as may be specified by the Chief
22 County Assessment Officer. The Chief County Assessment Officer
23 in counties of 3,000,000 or more inhabitants shall annually
24 give notice of the application period by mail or by
25 publication. In counties having less than 3,000,000
26 inhabitants, beginning with taxable year 1995 and thereafter,

1 to receive the exemption, a person shall submit an application
2 by July 1 of each taxable year to the Chief County Assessment
3 Officer of the county in which the property is located. A
4 county may, by ordinance, establish a date for submission of
5 applications that is different than July 1. The applicant shall
6 submit with the application an affidavit of the applicant's
7 total household income, age, marital status (and if married the
8 name and address of the applicant's spouse, if known), and
9 principal dwelling place of members of the household on January
10 1 of the taxable year. The Department shall establish, by rule,
11 a method for verifying the accuracy of affidavits filed by
12 applicants under this Section, and the Chief County Assessment
13 Officer may conduct audits of any taxpayer claiming an
14 exemption under this Section to verify that the taxpayer is
15 eligible to receive the exemption. Each application shall
16 contain or be verified by a written declaration that it is made
17 under the penalties of perjury. A taxpayer's signing a
18 fraudulent application under this Act is perjury, as defined in
19 Section 32-2 of the Criminal Code of 1961. The applications
20 shall be clearly marked as applications for the Senior Citizens
21 Assessment Freeze Homestead Exemption and must contain a notice
22 that any taxpayer who receives the exemption is subject to an
23 audit by the Chief County Assessment Officer.

24 Notwithstanding any other provision to the contrary, in
25 counties having fewer than 3,000,000 inhabitants, if an
26 applicant fails to file the application required by this

1 Section in a timely manner and this failure to file is due to a
2 mental or physical condition sufficiently severe so as to
3 render the applicant incapable of filing the application in a
4 timely manner, the Chief County Assessment Officer may extend
5 the filing deadline for a period of 30 days after the applicant
6 regains the capability to file the application, but in no case
7 may the filing deadline be extended beyond 3 months of the
8 original filing deadline. In order to receive the extension
9 provided in this paragraph, the applicant shall provide the
10 Chief County Assessment Officer with a signed statement from
11 the applicant's physician stating the nature and extent of the
12 condition, that, in the physician's opinion, the condition was
13 so severe that it rendered the applicant incapable of filing
14 the application in a timely manner, and the date on which the
15 applicant regained the capability to file the application.

16 Beginning January 1, 1998, notwithstanding any other
17 provision to the contrary, in counties having fewer than
18 3,000,000 inhabitants, if an applicant fails to file the
19 application required by this Section in a timely manner and
20 this failure to file is due to a mental or physical condition
21 sufficiently severe so as to render the applicant incapable of
22 filing the application in a timely manner, the Chief County
23 Assessment Officer may extend the filing deadline for a period
24 of 3 months. In order to receive the extension provided in this
25 paragraph, the applicant shall provide the Chief County
26 Assessment Officer with a signed statement from the applicant's

1 physician stating the nature and extent of the condition, and
2 that, in the physician's opinion, the condition was so severe
3 that it rendered the applicant incapable of filing the
4 application in a timely manner.

5 In counties having less than 3,000,000 inhabitants, if an
6 applicant was denied an exemption in taxable year 1994 and the
7 denial occurred due to an error on the part of an assessment
8 official, or his or her agent or employee, then beginning in
9 taxable year 1997 the applicant's base year, for purposes of
10 determining the amount of the exemption, shall be 1993 rather
11 than 1994. In addition, in taxable year 1997, the applicant's
12 exemption shall also include an amount equal to (i) the amount
13 of any exemption denied to the applicant in taxable year 1995
14 as a result of using 1994, rather than 1993, as the base year,
15 (ii) the amount of any exemption denied to the applicant in
16 taxable year 1996 as a result of using 1994, rather than 1993,
17 as the base year, and (iii) the amount of the exemption
18 erroneously denied for taxable year 1994.

19 For purposes of this Section, a person who will be 65 years
20 of age during the current taxable year shall be eligible to
21 apply for the homestead exemption during that taxable year.
22 Application shall be made during the application period in
23 effect for the county of his or her residence.

24 The Chief County Assessment Officer may determine the
25 eligibility of a life care facility that qualifies as a
26 cooperative to receive the benefits provided by this Section by

1 use of an affidavit, application, visual inspection,
2 questionnaire, or other reasonable method in order to insure
3 that the tax savings resulting from the exemption are credited
4 by the management firm to the apportioned tax liability of each
5 qualifying resident. The Chief County Assessment Officer may
6 request reasonable proof that the management firm has so
7 credited that exemption.

8 Except as provided in this Section, all information
9 received by the chief county assessment officer or the
10 Department from applications filed under this Section, or from
11 any investigation conducted under the provisions of this
12 Section, shall be confidential, except for official purposes or
13 pursuant to official procedures for collection of any State or
14 local tax or enforcement of any civil or criminal penalty or
15 sanction imposed by this Act or by any statute or ordinance
16 imposing a State or local tax. Any person who divulges any such
17 information in any manner, except in accordance with a proper
18 judicial order, is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

19 Nothing contained in this Section shall prevent the
20 Director or chief county assessment officer from publishing or
21 making available reasonable statistics concerning the
22 operation of the exemption contained in this Section in which
23 the contents of claims are grouped into aggregates in such a
24 way that information contained in any individual claim shall
25 not be disclosed.

26 (d) Each Chief County Assessment Officer shall annually

1 publish a notice of availability of the exemption provided
2 under this Section. The notice shall be published at least 60
3 days but no more than 75 days prior to the date on which the
4 application must be submitted to the Chief County Assessment
5 Officer of the county in which the property is located. The
6 notice shall appear in a newspaper of general circulation in
7 the county.

8 Notwithstanding Sections 6 and 8 of the State Mandates Act,
9 no reimbursement by the State is required for the
10 implementation of any mandate created by this Section.

11 Notwithstanding any other rulemaking authority that may
12 exist, neither the Governor nor any agency or agency head under
13 the jurisdiction of the Governor has any authority to make or
14 promulgate rules to implement or enforce the provisions of this
15 amendatory Act of the 95th General Assembly. If, however, the
16 Governor believes that rules are necessary to implement or
17 enforce the provisions of this amendatory Act of the 95th
18 General Assembly, the Governor may suggest rules to the General
19 Assembly by filing them with the Clerk of the House and the
20 Secretary of the Senate and by requesting that the General
21 Assembly authorize such rulemaking by law, enact those
22 suggested rules into law, or take any other appropriate action
23 in the General Assembly's discretion. Nothing contained in this
24 amendatory Act of the 95th General Assembly shall be
25 interpreted to grant rulemaking authority under any other
26 Illinois statute where such authority is not otherwise

1 explicitly given. For the purposes of this paragraph, "rules"
2 is given the meaning contained in Section 1-70 of the Illinois
3 Administrative Procedure Act, and "agency" and "agency head"
4 are given the meanings contained in Sections 1-20 and 1-25 of
5 the Illinois Administrative Procedure Act to the extent that
6 such definitions apply to agencies or agency heads under the
7 jurisdiction of the Governor.

8 (Source: P.A. 94-794, eff. 5-22-06; 95-644, eff. 10-12-07.)