



Eight years ago, I took the oath of office on a cool, sunny Saturday afternoon on September 12, 2009, in a very unassuming start outside the Wheeling Village Hall in front of only a Lake County Judge and no one there to celebrate the moment with me. Kathy Ryg had stepped down after a distinguished career and I was slated to replace her via appointment. My four and a half terms came to a quick start, including a steep learning curve and an immediate primary election with four subsequent competitive general elections.

Today, after having the humbling privilege of serving my constituents for these past eight years, I have decided that I will not be seeking another term. I do plan to complete my entire current term with vigor equal to what I have demonstrated to date including my trademark #CarolsCoffees, personal replies to constituents' emails, and semi-monthly tours of District 59 organizations.

As I reflect on my tenure, I am most proud of my budget efforts. I fought for balanced budgets, drafted the Budgeting for Results legislation, and most recently, I led the bipartisan/bicameral group this spring that helped break the two-year state budget impasse.

I am proud of my legislative accomplishments: taking needed steps to stabilize our pension systems; helping businesses large and small by passing intrastate equity crowdfunding, angel tax credits and other pro-business initiatives; and putting young people first through voting rights at age 17, safer soccer goals, increased college credit for advanced placement exams, concussion certification for high school coaches and increased penalties for hosting underage drinking parties.

I wanted to demonstrate a different way to be successful in Springfield based on building trusting bipartisan relationships and being a compromise-focused legislator. I have fought to bring Democrats and Republicans together to set aside partisan fighting and build real relationships for solutions over talking points and finger pointing. I consider many of my colleagues from both parties my friends and I will truly miss working with them.

And I am really proud to say I have stuck to the principles of public service I set from the beginning. I have worked to change a culture of partisanship and politicizing at the Capitol. I have worked to pass good, solid bills that help my constituents. And I have worked to solve the major challenges plaguing our state and produce real reforms.

Let me be clear: this is not a resignation announcement. I will work harder than ever through the end of my term to serve my constituents through good legislation and public events. Public service is in my blood, and I will remain open to other opportunities to serve you. I set a goal from the outset to serve between eight and 12 years, and I have done that. It is time for someone else to represent you.

Thank you for entrusting me to serve you these last eight years. This job has been trying, frustrating and difficult, but incredibly rewarding and an experience I will treasure for a lifetime. I look forward to working with you this next year to continue to change our state and make you proud.

Sincerely,

Rep. Carol Sente
D-Vernon Hills
59th House District