



Title: **Lawsuit Abuse Awareness Week recognized in West Frankfort**
 Author: Staff report
 Size: 50.99 square inch
 West Frankfort, IL Circulation: 1511



WEST FRANKFORT

Lawsuit Abuse Awareness Week recognized in West Frankfort

Staff report

West Frankfort Mayor Tom Jordan proclaimed the week of Oct. 6 to 10 as Illinois Lawsuit Abuse Awareness Week with the stroke of a pen Tuesday afternoon at City Hall.

Travis Akin, executive director of Illinois Lawsuit Abuse Watch, said there are all kinds of horror stories of plaintiffs who end up with little or nothing from a judgement or settlement as the result of high interest lawsuit loans taken.

"Lawsuit lenders sometimes can charge as much as 150 percent interest, which is why many people now refer to these lenders as "lawsuit loan sharks," Akin said. "Unfortunately, Illinois is already ranked as one of the most litigious, plaintiff-friendly states in the country.

"Illinois consumers need to be protected from the 'lawsuit loan sharks.' It is time for Illinois legislators to pass common sense, reasonable regulations that

protect consumers from being exploited by predatory lawsuit lenders."

The proclamation reads, in part, "Lawsuit Abuse Awareness Week is an opportunity to focus the public's attention on the need for civil justice reform in Illinois and to finally shed the state's reputation as the "Lawsuit Abuse Capital of the Midwest."

Akin said citizens of Illinois are deeply concerned with the impact frivolous lawsuits have on businesses, consumers, taxpayers and local governments.

"We understand that stopping lawsuit abuse starts with each and every citizen because unnecessary lawsuits hurt the ability of Illinois communities to attract jobs and opportunities," he said. "One of the most important ways for citizens to stop lawsuit abuse is to serve on juries rather than find excuses to get out of jury duty. Every man, woman and child in Illinois pays a hidden 'lawsuit tax' of \$857 per year."



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West Frankfort Mayor Tom Jordan signs a proclamation making it Illinois Lawsuit Abuse Awareness Week in West Frankfort, as Travis Akin, executive director of Illinois Lawsuit Abuse Watch, looks on. LEIGH M. CALDWELL PHOTO