

## State GOP chairman criticizes Thompson, Schillerstrom

### He says recent actions antithetical to Republican beliefs

By Rick Pearson

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DECATUR—The state's GOP chairman issued an unusual public rebuke Saturday to two prominent Republicans—former Gov. Jim Thompson and Robert Schillerstrom, DuPage County Board chairman—saying their recent activities send the wrong signal about what Republicans believe.

The remarks by Illinois Republican Chairman Andy McKenna capped an eclectic final day of the state GOP convention, which also featured a call-in from presumptive Republican presidential nominee Sen. John McCain of Arizona, who promised a "vigorous" campaign in Illinois despite the Democratic favorite-son candidacy of Sen. Barack Obama.

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McKenna also took on Schillerstrom, the 10-year chairman of the DuPage County Board, for lobbying in Springfield for permission to raise the county's sales taxes to prevent program cuts and layoffs. Schillerstrom also backed, as an alternative, an increase in regional transit taxes, of which DuPage County is receiving a cut. "It's a disappointment to me when a county board chairman goes to Springfield and lobbies with Democrats for a sales tax increase because that makes people feel like that's what Republicans believe in," McKenna said.

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McKenna's remarks toward Schillerstrom revealed heightened tensions between the two.

"His statements are unfortunate," said Schillerstrom, who attended the convention. "Conventions are to bring people together, and obviously that statement is divisive and I'm disappointed that he did it. I don't think it helps the Republican Party."