



**A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**

# **SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS**

**BRENDAN  
KELLY**  
★ FOR CONGRESS ★

**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS:  
A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**

**JULY 2018**

**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**  
**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS:  
A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**

---

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS	4
SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS HEALTH CARE	6
SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS INFRASTRUCTURE	9
SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS' WORKING CLASS IN A 21ST CENTURY ECONOMY	12
SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS FAMILIES	16
SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS' ORGANIZED LABOR	18
SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY	20
SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS' FARMERS	22
SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS FROM THE CYCLE OF POVERTY	24
SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS FROM OPIOIDS	28
SAVING SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE AND THOSE WHO SERVE	31
SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS, TOGETHER	34

---

**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**  
**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS**

**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS**

---

I grew up in Southern Illinois. I went to school here, went to church, played sports, rode my bike around, and, on the first day of sixth grade, I met my wife here. With the help of an ROTC scholarship, I left to go to Notre Dame. After college, I saw the world while serving in the Navy. When I finished my time on active duty, I knew where I needed to go. I needed to go home, to Southern Illinois.

I did come home. I proposed to my wife, Joanne, worked my way through law school, became a prosecutor, and together Joanne and I have raised our two boys here. We've watched them grow up with childhoods similar to my own: watched them play baseball, do chores, dog sit for a little money, and ride their bikes in circles around our neighborhood.

As my sons have moved through their Southern Illinois childhoods, I've felt a change. Something is different. The world around them has shifted—and not for the better. I've watched, with a sinking feeling in my heart, as all of us have become more and more divided. And I've watched as Southern Illinois has suffered for it. While people on the coasts thrive and cities boom, our jobs, communities, and values have been abandoned and forgotten. Our leaders in both parties have lost sight of what works for folks here at home—and our elected representatives just go along with them. Swept away by ugly rhetoric and crushed by the pressure of the

---

**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**  
**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS**

moneyed, powerful few, they've stopped listening to us. They've stopped fighting for us.

The building blocks for a safe, secure, and sustainable future for Southern Illinois already exist. They're rooted in each and every one of us. Because when all is said and done, our most valuable resource is each other. Our families, our classrooms, our teachers, our farmers, our union workers, our service members, our veterans, our nurses—every person in every bed who wakes up every day and goes to work and gets things done. We need leaders who believe in us and in Southern Illinois as much as we do. We need someone who fights not for the powerful few, but for us here at home, in Southern Illinois.

As a candidate for Congress, I've put a lot of miles on my car, knocked on a lot of doors, and made a lot of calls. I've attended meetings in church basements, American Legions, community centers, union halls, businesses, schools, and living rooms. I've been to every county in the 12th Congressional District again and again and again. I've done my homework. But the most important thing is that I've looked folks in the eye and I've *listened, really listened*. Every person I've seen and listened to really believes in Southern Illinois. They want someone to help them fight to save it. Southern Illinoisans aren't looking for someone with all the answers or someone who will tell them what they want to hear. They're looking for someone who will work their butt off to help them with what they care about.

The pages that follow contain just a few of the things that I've heard from the people of Southern Illinois: thoughts, ideas, values, concrete actions that are all important to people here. They're things that will help them. They'll help save Southern Illinois.

When the time comes, I want my boys to choose to raise their families here. But first, we have work to do. We have to save our home. We have to save Southern Illinois.

**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**  
**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS HEALTH CARE**

**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS**  
**HEALTH CARE**

---

We have to first and foremost secure the health of families in Southern Illinois. When we are healthy, our communities are healthy. When our communities are healthy, our economy is healthy.

Every person in Southern Illinois has the right to affordable health care. Many working people in Southern Illinois can't access or afford quality care. Many others have to deal with the consequences and agonizing choices that come with rising premiums, out of control costs, and huge health care bills.

Over the last two years, Southern Illinois's representatives have repeatedly sided with Washington party leaders in attempts to take health care away from thousands of Southern Illinoisans. They've left us paying more for basic health care while they push deals that hurt seniors and people with pre-existing conditions like diabetes, cancer, and asthma.<sup>1</sup> Now they're pushing plans to privatize Medicare and Social Security while voting to give billions of dollars to the wealthy—a choice that could eventually force serious cuts to these critical programs. These sustained actions are a direct threat to the future and health of generations of Southern Illinoisans.

---

## **SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE** **SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS HEALTH CARE**

We cannot trash the health care of thousands of Southern Illinoisans without a real plan to replace it. We must set aside the same old party lines, and build on what we have to reduce costs while maintaining (and improving) access to and quality of care. The first step is swift bipartisan action to stabilize our failing insurance marketplaces, while continuing to allow kids to stay on their parents' plans, retaining coverage and protections for people with pre-existing conditions, and preventing our seniors from being hit with a savings-draining Age Tax.

There are many ways to measure the health of a country and region. If the very health of our people pales in comparison to the health of the stock market—if lives and futures are ignored in favor of dividends and stratified growth that benefits only a few—then averaged economic statistics mean very little to Southern Illinois. One statistic that truly matters for Southern Illinois? For the first time in generations, children are expected to live shorter lifespans than their parents.<sup>2</sup>




The more we focus on the health of Southern Illinoisans, the more Southern Illinois can grow and succeed. Let's strengthen our health clinics, support our rural hospitals, and expand our addiction and rehab centers. Let's prioritize federal incentives that encourage more health care professionals—nurses, doctors, addiction and mental health specialists—to live and work and serve in our communities that so badly need to be seen, heard, and treated. Instead of turning the health care of our veterans over to insurance companies and gutting the VA, let's build upon the strengths of the VA system and make continuous improvements in a bipartisan way. Emergencies happen in the middle of the night. Babies are born, heart attacks strike, and bones break. Southern Illinoisans must be able to access the care they need when they need it. Cuts to rural hospitals and mental health services endanger the lives of Southern Illinoisans. Investments in health care and health care policy must address the specific needs of Southern Illinois.

## **SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**

### **SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS HEALTH CARE**

We must preserve and protect Medicare and Social Security. Cuts to these programs will hurt the 34,000 Southern Illinoisans who rely on Medicare, the 147,537 who rely on Social Security, and the many working men and women who are paying into those programs right now and relying on them for their future benefits.<sup>3</sup> We can reduce costs and make life-saving medication more affordable by allowing Medicare and Medicaid to negotiate drug prices with pharmaceutical companies. Big Pharma cannot continue to dictate the price of medicines we need. Leaving Southern Illinois families on their own to deal with the whims of private insurance companies is not the path to better health care.

#### **WHEN I SERVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS, I'LL WORK WITH ANYONE FROM ANY PARTY TO:**

-  Protect Social Security and Medicare from the looming threat of further cuts and privatization that would devastate families and shutter health care providers in Southern Illinois
-  Prevent an Age Tax and keep protections for people with pre-existing conditions
-  Bring down costs of insurance premiums and prescription drug prices by stabilizing the health insurance market, and introducing commonsense cost-saving measures like allowing Medicare to negotiate with Big Pharma
-  Improve health care services for Southern Illinois by encouraging more health care professionals and clinics to make Southern Illinois their home
-  Improve VA services through continuous aggressive bipartisan oversight and supervision—not privatization that throws veterans under the bus to the benefit of insurance companies
-  Expand availability and access to health care coverage



**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**  
**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS INFRASTRUCTURE**

**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS**  
**INFRASTRUCTURE**

---

We cannot expect our communities to thrive and attract new businesses when Southern Illinois' infrastructure is literally crumbling. Every year, we deal with boil order after boil order because of rusting, failing pipes.<sup>4</sup> Potholes damage our cars and reduce our gas mileage.<sup>5</sup> This spring, nine counties in Southern Illinois were declared "disaster areas" because a broken water main left thousands of people without water.<sup>6</sup> Police stations built during the Roosevelt administration undermine public trust, and the specter of lead poisoning and heavy metal contamination haunts entire communities.<sup>7</sup> Businesses struggle to operate, and students can't finish their homework because of limited access to slow internet.

Some people in both parties want to burn bridges. I want to build them. Literally. We have to. There is no excuse for Congress's failure to pass an infrastructure bill, but divisiveness in DC rides right over the needs of people in places like Southern Illinois. We can replace rusted water pipes with new ones, and fix our roads and bridges. We can rebuild our police stations, make sure our families have safe housing to live in, and fix our schools so our students can focus on learning. We can update the power grid, and support new technologies that will help bring high-speed internet to every corner of Southern Illinois. Hard dollar federal

---



## **SOME PEOPLE IN BOTH PARTIES WANT TO BURN BRIDGES.**

**I WANT TO BUILD THEM. LITERALLY. ”**

investment in infrastructure rebuilding and maintenance will employ our current generation of union brothers and sisters to make Southern Illinois an easier and cleaner place for future generations of Southern Illinoisans to live.

Infrastructure doesn't just mean fixing what is broken. There are projects that can help grow our economy by making Southern Illinois more accessible to the rest of America. Retooling cargo train routes between St. Louis and Carbondale for passenger rail and finally expanding the routes between I-255 and Carbondale into a four lane highway would make those areas and surrounding areas more accessible to students, tourists, and investors.





Continued investment in our port districts is important as well. The Kaskaskia Port District is among the top 10 largest inland ports in the entire country and functions as a growing economic engine and transportation resource for agricultural and other businesses all over Southern Illinois. There are shovel-ready projects lined up, just waiting for the resources and workers to get it done. The Cairo Port District, which needs considerable dedicated investment, is uniquely situated where the Mississippi and Ohio rivers meet. It would serve an entirely different market from Kaskaskia, and has huge potential if there is a voice in federal government willing to work to realize that potential.<sup>8</sup> Investment in our waterways and lock and dam systems will produce tremendous returns, ensuring economic security long into the future.

## **SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**

### **SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS INFRASTRUCTURE**

We also need to look for unique community strengths that can add economic value and change perceptions about a place. Cahokia Mounds, a United Nations World Heritage Site, is an invaluable historical asset that absolutely should be a National Monument or National Park. Formally recognizing the importance of this site to humankind and to American history would spur economic activity and tourism, which would benefit nearby areas and the entire region.

#### **WHEN I SERVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS, I'LL WORK WITH ANYONE FROM ANY PARTY TO:**

-  Pass a federal plan to bring hard dollars home to employ our brothers and sisters in organized labor to rebuild and maintain our roads, bridges, waterways, electrical grid, and water supply
-  Build the Southwestern Illinois four-lane highway and link passenger rail from St. Louis to Carbondale and Jackson County
-  Continue to invest and build up the Kaskaskia & Cairo Port Districts, as well as our locks, dams, and levies
-  Update federal policy to support technologies that will improve rural internet access

**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**  
**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS' WORKING CLASS IN A 21ST CENTURY ECONOMY**

**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS'**  
**WORKING CLASS IN A 21ST CENTURY ECONOMY**

---

Over the past four decades, wealth and power have become concentrated in the hands of fewer and fewer people, and Southern Illinois has suffered for it. The bad decisions and deals that made sense for the few elite people at the top hurt too many of us here at home. Wages stay low, while jobs and kids move away and the prices of basic things like prescription drugs, internet, and gas go up.<sup>9</sup> Decision makers who are supposed to enforce the rules of trade are distant, disconnected, and disinterested in the impact on Southern Illinois.

More recently, our leaders in Washington have accelerated this negative trend and repeatedly turned their backs on Southern Illinois families and businesses. The backwards 2017 tax bill does very little to rebuild Southern Illinois. 83% of its permanent breaks go to the wealthiest Americans, while taxes on middle class families will go up over time.<sup>10</sup> The bill adds \$2 trillion to our national debt, and makes us choose between cutting Social Security and Medicare or passing along massive debt to our kids. We know where this Congress' loyalty lies—and it's not with us.

Rising inequality is only made worse by the growing influence of big multi-national corporations and monopolies that reduce competition, consumer choice, and worker bargaining power.

---

**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**  
**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS' WORKING CLASS IN A 21ST CENTURY ECONOMY**

The extreme concentration of power in the hands of a few hurts wages, hurts job growth, and hurts small businesses, suppliers, and innovators.<sup>11</sup> CEOs make salaries 361 times greater than the average worker, but a generation of Southern Illinois kids have grown to find the middle class life of their parents beyond their reach.<sup>12</sup> The average worker is more productive than 15, or 20, or 30 years ago—but the only people who profit from that productivity are already at the top.<sup>13</sup> Rising prices of daily expenses like travel, cable, and food limit the lives of Southern Illinois workers whose wages can't keep up.

Southern Illinoisans who have worked their entire lives toward retirement still face economic insecurity. We need to act to keep the promises made to truck drivers, coal miners, carpenters, ironworkers, steelworkers, sheet metal workers, roofers, bricklayers, painters, and other hard-working Southern Illinoisans, so they can all retire with dignity. Folks who worked all their lives and were promised a secure retirement should not be punished for the corruption and greed of Wall Street.

We also must revamp our approach to trade. Huge deals within distant trade organizations often leave out Southern Illinois voices and representation, leaving us far more likely to be left



**OVER THE PAST FOUR DECADES, WEALTH AND POWER HAVE BECOME CONCENTRATED IN THE HANDS OF FEWER AND FEWER PEOPLE, AND SOUTHERN ILLINOIS HAS SUFFERED FOR IT. "**

**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**  
**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS' WORKING CLASS IN A 21ST CENTURY ECONOMY**









behind. When specific countries break the rules of these massive agreements without consequence, Southern Illinois gets hurt again. Scattershot trade policy compromises our national security; hurts too many American workers, farmers, and businesses; and raises prices on basic consumer goods that many of us can barely afford anyway. We cannot afford to isolate ourselves from the world—but we can adjust our policy in thoughtful ways to make it fair. Tough, focused, and wise bipartisan trade reform can help every Southern Illinoisan by creating a level playing field for Southern Illinoisans in all sectors of the economy. When it comes to trade, we should be looking out for the people of America, not the Bank of America.

We must take steps to make sure that Southern Illinois is an essential cog in the giant machine of world trade. Take the old Bombardier factory in Benton as an example. Many of the factory's former employees are specially trained to work with fiberglass. As the use of alternative forms of energy grow around the U.S., we could encourage a company that produces wind turbines to make its blades and component parts with Southern Illinois workers in that old Southern Illinois factory. While there isn't much wind in Southern Illinois, those huge, oversized parts could then easily be put on tracks or transported on I-57. There are opportunities like this one all over Southern Illinois.

We cannot let elite, career politicians in Washington give up on the middle class. We cannot afford to wait for the leftovers of the powerful few to trickle down to the rest of us. We need to invest in local communities and encourage desperately needed long-term local growth. We can lead the way in modernizing regulations while continuing to protect our air, water, workers, health, and safety. We can help entrepreneurs start new businesses, which will drive wage growth. Most of all, we need inventive leaders to harness the creative energy of Southern Illinoisans, and find solutions that tie us to emerging parts of the new economy instead of leaving us behind.

**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**  
**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS' WORKING CLASS IN A 21ST CENTURY ECONOMY**

**WHEN I SERVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS,  
I'LL WORK WITH ANYONE FROM ANY PARTY TO:**

-  Support tax policy that closes loopholes for the top 1% and instead benefits middle class families
-  Prevent big mergers that would harm consumers, workers, and competition; vigorously review post-merger outcomes to ensure competition
-  Put failing pension plans back on solid ground to ensure they can meet their commitments to retirees today and workers for decades to come, in part by setting up a Pension Rehabilitation Administration (PRA) and protecting Social Security
-  Put safeguards in place so Southern Illinois workers and retirees can retire with the certainty and dignity they were promised
-  Lead regulation modernization by following the “3 Rs” of good regulatory reform: Repeal, Rewrite, or Retain
-  Encourage the growth of local businesses, small start-ups, and specialized manufacturing that would raise wages and keep jobs in Southern Illinois
-  Look out for the people of America, not the Bank of America, with a tough but thoughtful approach to trade policy that would unite us with our allies to reform global trade and level the playing field for American workers, producers, and manufacturers
-  Increase the network of thousands of partnerships between businesses, career technical programs, public schools and community colleges to ensure Southern Illinoisans have the skills employers are looking for to make them successful in today's economy

**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**  
**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS' FAMILIES**

**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS' FAMILIES**

---

Many families across Southern Illinois cannot afford parental leave, and others have to tap into their savings in order to provide the early learning and child care that helps their children grow. From the moment of a child's birth, Southern Illinois parents are faced with a series of impossible choices. Do they spend time with their babies in the first weeks of their lives, or go back to work just in order to pay the bills? Is it easier to make ends meet by going back to work and paying for expensive child care, or by staying home with the kids and losing a paycheck? Every day, parents (and women especially) choose to sacrifice higher paychecks and future career advancement to keep their families afloat in the near term. Southern Illinois pays an economic price by losing parents who can't afford childcare from the workforce.

Working families in Southern Illinois need access to affordable child care; greater parental leave options; and quality preschool programs that prepare kids for success in kindergarten and beyond. Options like these help parents maintain middle class lives, and help kids live a healthy, productive life. Families are our country's foundation and future. We need to make it easier for new parents to support their children in the earliest and most foundational years of their lives.





---





**WE NEED TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR NEW PARENTS TO SUPPORT THEIR CHILDREN IN THE EARLIEST AND MOST FOUNDATIONAL YEARS OF THEIR LIVES. "**

**WHEN I SERVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS,  
I'LL WORK WITH ANYONE FROM ANY PARTY TO:**

-  Work with employers and unions to ensure parents have the ability to take paid leave and care for their infants
-  Increase the number of children eligible for child care assistance, and ensure all those who are eligible have the ability to enroll their child in a quality program
-  Make sure toddlers receive the building blocks they need for future education by implementing universal pre-Kindergarten
-  Help all Head Start programs meet the new expanded duration requirements

**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**  
**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS' ORGANIZED LABOR**

**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS'**  
**ORGANIZED LABOR**

---

Organized labor is the backbone of our middle class. The men and women of organized labor manufacture our cars, build the roofs over our heads, and produce the energy that flows through the grid they built to the schools where they teach our children. They protect us from danger, put out fires, nurse us back to health, bag our groceries, and deliver the packages we order. They've established two day weekends, and put their bodies and jobs on the line to improve labor standards, raise wages, and to accomplish many other things that allow workers all over Southern Illinois to live more secure and better lives.

Over the last thirty years, unions have come under attack after attack from people like Bruce Rauner.<sup>14</sup> Wages have stagnated, and inequality has risen to levels unseen in a century. This is no coincidence. When our unions suffer, our entire middle class suffers. We have to stand up for organized labor and workers all over America. We must allow and encourage collective bargaining, protect prevailing wage, raise the minimum wage to a living one, and maintain the National Labor Relations Board. We need to prevent federal "Right-To-Work" legislation from passing, and create a viable plan for paid parental leave. Turning our back on our unions is equivalent to turning our backs on every family in Southern Illinois.






---

## **SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS' ORGANIZED LABOR**

Our young people are our most valuable resource. We can help them stay here and grow our communities by connecting them to unions, apprenticeships, and employer programs that can train them in the specialized skills that businesses need. This way our young Southern Illinois workers remain integral to a rapidly changing economy and we arm our small businesses with a workforce skilled enough to compete against anybody in the world.

America is at its strongest, and our middle class is at its toughest and most resilient, when our labor unions are valued, supported, and growing. Only by standing shoulder to shoulder will we be able to build a country for all of us, not just the powerful few.

### **WHEN I SERVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS, I'LL WORK WITH ANYONE FROM ANY PARTY TO:**

-  Prevent federal "Right-To-Work" legislation
-  Continue to fight for prevailing wage, collective bargaining, and the National Labor Relations Board
-  Ensure Southern Illinois union workers can retire with dignity
-  Fight for a living wage
-  Create more training and apprenticeship programs in high schools and community colleges to help connect young people to unions and acquire the specialized skills employers need

**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**  
**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY**

**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY**

---

We need united, decisive leadership at the local, state, and federal level to save Southern Illinois University's main campus at Carbondale. Our current representative in Congress has been indifferent to SIU for decades. Letting one of the crown jewels of the Southern Illinois economy fall prey to ideological battles is unconscionable. The failure of SIU would be a blow to the local economy and leave Southern Illinois further behind.

SIU needs allies who will work to help secure federal grants that allow for new growth and development, instead of just maintain the status quo. We need to stand up to and stop those in power now in DC who advocate drastic cuts to research through the National Institute of Health, the National Science Foundation, and other agencies.

Faster connections to St. Louis and other major metropolitan areas will open the counties surrounding Carbondale to more tourism, and will help SIU retain and attract more students. Exploring the potential of retooling existing rail to accommodate passenger rail more directly between St. Louis and Carbondale could create another opportunity to better connect SIU to St. Louis. Federal investment in roads and transportation will help to make SIU, Carbondale, and the surrounding areas more accessible and






---

## **SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE** **SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY**

connected. There have been many plans and funding proposals to connect and widen existing routes from St. Louis and the Metro-East to Carbondale.<sup>15</sup> We simply need leadership and an aggressive advocate in Congress to work with state and local authorities and unions to finalize and build one of those many plans.

Carbondale and the surrounding counties need SIU to thrive. In addition to attracting more students, we should take further steps to ensure that four-year degrees are accessible to those who choose to pursue them. Higher education is supposed to make life better, not make it harder—and the federal government should not profit off our own country’s students. Federal college loans must be interest free. We should continue to work with community colleges to make it easier for students to transfer to SIU after achieving their Associate’s degree closer to home. The future success of SIU, SWIC, and John A. Logan are interdependent. Reducing barriers to success for each of them helps all of them. And that helps Southern Illinois.

### **WHEN I SERVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS, I’LL WORK WITH ANYONE FROM ANY PARTY TO:**

-  Prevent cuts to SIUC’s research funding; secure federal grants that help expand SIUC’s research capacity
-  Invest in infrastructure and public transportation to make SIUC and Carbondale more accessible to students and staff
-  Stop the federal government from making a profit on student loans
-  Reform the Federal Work Study program to allow students to get job experience in their fields of study at SIU
-  Develop a process to allow young entrepreneurs who start businesses in distressed communities in Southern Illinois to defer loan payments on undergraduate loans

**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**  
**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS' FARMERS**

**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS'**  
**FARMERS**

---

Farming and agribusiness is a huge and important part of Southern Illinois's economy. At the federal level, we must investigate the globalized consolidation of commodities, transportation, and land into corporate agri-businesses, as well as business practices that make it harder for smaller farmers to access fair capital and to acquire and sell agricultural commodities. Given the broad atmosphere of uncertainty and anxiety surrounding the US agricultural industry, our congressional leaders need to be taking action rather than perpetuating gridlock. I will work with anybody in the House to pass a strong, bipartisan Farm Bill. At a time when our farmers and rural communities need a more aggressive response to their concerns, farm bills that are muscled through by one party only serve to divide us, and worsen issues we should come together to solve.

The lack of substantive progress on infrastructure hurts the agricultural sector too. Rural roads and bridges, highways, freight rail, and inland waterways systems all need upgrades to keep moving products to market. We will stunt our farmers' future if we continue to modernize our means of production, but not our means of transportation. Further investment in infrastructure would also expand access to tourists from across the Midwest, allowing for the growth of agricultural tourism and smaller







---

## **SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE** **SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS' FARMERS**

agricultural sectors like orchards and vineyards.

At the same time, we need to make sure that agricultural communities, and their priorities, are served appropriately by the federal government. We need to include agricultural education at all levels of schooling, upgrade facilities for agricultural research, appropriately fund community colleges, and increase access to public loans and grants so kids growing up on farms can attend college. We must increase rural access to fairly priced telecom services, and encourage more health care professionals to establish practices or provide other health services in rural communities.

### **WHEN I SERVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS, I'LL WORK WITH ANYONE FROM ANY PARTY TO:**

-  Pass a bipartisan farm bill
-  Take appropriate anti-trust action regarding further consolidation of agricultural commodity and transportation providers
-  Ensure that our trade practices don't unfairly punish farmers
-  Upgrade facilities for agricultural research so we don't hinder our development and ability to compete globally
-  Rebuild rural infrastructure to modernize the means of moving our products to market
-  Invest in rural health services, internet access, and agricultural education

**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**  
**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS FROM THE CYCLE OF POVERTY**

**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS**  
**FROM THE CYCLE OF POVERTY**

---

We must take action to save our most impoverished communities. Too many Southern Illinois families have been gripped by a cycle of cruel inter-generational poverty. But with a new member of Congress who believes in these communities, and who believes that the government is here to work with people, there is real hope for the future. The benefits that come from breaking the cycle of poverty will not be limited to certain communities—they'll also help fulfill the potential of the entire region.

Economic research shows that in no area of Southern Illinois can a full-time minimum-wage worker afford a modest two-bedroom rental home at local rates, so public housing remains the only option for thousands of Southern Illinoisans.<sup>16</sup> And HUD has mismanaged it for decades. Requests for development proposals are perpetually delayed in East Saint Louis, and the residents of Cairo public housing have been tossed to the wind. Developments face billions of dollars in deferred maintenance. Mothers spray Raid around their kids at night so that cockroaches don't crawl in their ears.<sup>17</sup> Parts of East Saint Louis public housing have the highest rates of violent crime in the country.<sup>18</sup> Public housing is often disconnected from social services and the education, training, and health care resources many families need to allow them to make enough money to move.

---



**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**  
**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS FROM THE CYCLE OF POVERTY**

The repeated trauma experienced by children and adults in communities with intense poverty only contributes to the cycle of poverty. The day-to-day struggle to survive; repeated exposure to blight; decades-old, unhealthy environmental conditions; street and family violence; and an education system ill-equipped to handle students experiencing this kind of repeated trauma can result in decreased academic and personal achievement, and can contribute to a higher likelihood of involvement in the criminal justice system as both offender and victim. As the State's Attorney in St. Clair County, which includes East St. Louis, I've seen firsthand the struggles of community members and law enforcement officers trying to cope with excessive community violence. We need more community oriented policing grants and trauma informed education to help community law enforcement officers work better with community members. Efforts like these help to reduce crime rates proactively and help traumatized students learn how to overcome and transcend the effects of trauma. We should rethink federal policy on all grants, and change their parameters to better work with smaller but denser concentrations of violence and poverty outside of big metropolitan areas.

More than most, our poorest towns and cities need renewed investment in their infrastructure. Abandonment and age have wrought havoc on the invisible systems that so many of us take for granted: water and sewage systems, electric service, internet access. It's difficult to take advantage of business tax incentives when access to the most basic types of infrastructure and safety cannot be guaranteed.

The recent tax imposed on churches, faith-based organizations, and other non-profits in Southern Illinois by my opponent and those in power is absolutely backwards.<sup>19</sup> This tax could cost those groups tens of thousands of dollars that should go towards helping to meet the needs of our vulnerable. Wall Street Banks and Big Pharma get billions in tax breaks while Southern Illinois churches and charities get slapped with a tax hike. That's not working for

**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**  
**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS FROM THE CYCLE OF POVERTY**

Southern Illinois—that's working for the powerful few. More than 600 churches and other groups have already united in support of repeal. I stand in solidarity with them.









We must recognize that at the core of each and every town sits a community—a tight-knit fabric of faces and families and hands bound together, partly by history and partly by place. Instead of one-off programs or task forces that fail and disappear, we need sustained communal support and development. We need to work more closely with community members of all kinds—pastors and teachers, business owners and parents. We must work with HUD, law enforcement officials, state authorities, and community leaders to rebuild our towns and make sure that every family has a clean and safe place to sleep every night. At the same time, it is our responsibility to ensure that the important connections that define and sustain people across entire communities are not frayed and broken on account of corrupt and inept policy.



**WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT AT THE CORE OF EACH AND EVERY TOWN SITS A COMMUNITY—A TIGHT-KNIT FABRIC OF FACES AND FAMILIES AND HANDS BOUND TOGETHER, PARTLY BY HISTORY AND PARTLY BY PLACE. "**

## **SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE** **SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS FROM THE CYCLE OF POVERTY**

### **WHEN I SERVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS, I'LL WORK WITH ANYONE FROM ANY PARTY TO:**

-  Rebuild public housing with the input of local tenants, law enforcement, social service providers and community members, and connect public housing with resources that can help families move from public housing
-  Invest in basic infrastructure including water, sewer, internet, and public safety facilities in high-poverty urban and rural communities
-  Ensure that small and minority-owned businesses have equal access to capital
-  Rethink parameters for grants to make them work better in areas with small but intense concentrations of violence and poverty
-  Reform this unconscionable tax on Southern Illinois' faith-based organizations and non-profit organizations that live out the principles of love, hope, and charity that are the heart of the people of Southern Illinois
-  Require trauma-informed education so our students who are hurting get the schooling they need
-  Support environmental enforcement by the DOJ and the EPA in high poverty communities
-  Protect social safety nets like Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and nutrition assistance that help hold fragile communities together

**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**  
**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS FROM OPIOIDS**

**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS**  
**FROM OPIOIDS**

---

As a prosecutor, a father, and simply someone who loves Southern Illinois, the opioid crisis has been devastating to witness and heartbreaking to fight. Last year, I became the first State's Attorney in Illinois to take the drug companies to court for their role in this struggle.<sup>20</sup> As State's Attorney of the largest county in the 12th Congressional District, my office has prosecuted thousands of drug cases involving heroin, fentanyl, and prescription drugs. We've diverted many addicts to treatment as well. I've spoken to thousands of Southern Illinois high school kids about the unique dangers of opioids. Still, across the nation, more people are killed now by opioids than by car accidents.<sup>21</sup> Let's be clear—we are not winning this struggle.

The economic cost to local government, to local health care providers, to employers, to schools, and to the life savings of families trying to save a loved one weigh heavily on Southern Illinois's economy.<sup>22</sup> The health and moral costs of the opioid epidemic are exacerbated by the economic toll the crisis creates as well.

Repeated partisan attempts to undermine access to health care by people in Congress like my opponent reduces access to treatment for thousands of Southern Illinois families.<sup>23</sup> If my opponent had his

---

## **SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**

### **SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS FROM OPIOIDS**

way and the Affordable Care Act was repealed, substance abuse treatment would no longer be considered an essential health benefit, meaning that even Southern Illinoisans who managed to hold on to their insurance would no longer be covered for life-saving addiction treatment.<sup>24</sup> 38,000 Southern Illinoisans would lose their health care coverage, 60% of whom would have been previously covered under Medicaid.<sup>25</sup> Every single one of those people would lose affordable access to life-saving mental health and addiction treatment, and rural hospitals would largely close their doors. The reality is that as a result of the repeated undermining of existing healthcare markets, many have *already* lost access.

Opioids like heroin and fentanyl flood into Southern Illinois from Mexico and China through various points of entry including our airports and seaports, but the ugly divide in Washington prevents action. Budgets proposed by those in power now advocate cutting COPS grants, eliminating support from the Department of Justice, and shifting more public safety costs onto local governments and taxpayers.<sup>26</sup> These approaches are all wrong. Law enforcement needs more help, not less to cope with this challenge. We need to hire more union customs and security personnel, and adapt new technologies to stop the trafficking of drugs.

Above all, Congress has yet to reign in the source of the opioid crisis: Big Pharma. If the opioid epidemic is a hurricane, excessive availability of prescription opioids are the warm water that feeds the storm. Big pharmaceutical companies made billions pushing prescription opioids far beyond their intended use, and they used those billions to hire lobbyists to influence Congress.<sup>27</sup> They made sure they could keep pushing prescription opioids, even though everyone knew they were addictive. According to the DEA, over 9 million individual oxycodone and hydrocodone pills were prescribed into one county in Southern Illinois over the course of a single year.<sup>28</sup> The cartels in Mexico noticed patterns like these and shifted the drug trade to opioids like heroin and fentanyl to meet





## **SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**

### **SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS FROM OPIOIDS**

the demand of prescription addicts.<sup>29</sup>

I was the first prosecutor in Illinois to take on Big Pharma.<sup>30</sup> Many others have joined the fight since. But the flood of money into politics is as big as the flood of opioids into Southern Illinois, and our pay-to-play Congress still fails to make Big Pharma change its ways—including my opponent, who has taken tens of thousands of dollars from Big Pharma.<sup>31</sup> We have to elect leaders to Congress who have the courage to take on the moneyed interests that are destroying lives in Southern Illinois.

#### **WHEN I SERVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS, I'LL WORK WITH ANYONE FROM ANY PARTY TO:**

-  Support sustained funding for treatment, expand access to alternative pain management methods, and stabilize health care so more Southern Illinoisans can afford mental health and addiction treatment
-  Ensure appropriate oversight of the distribution of prescription painkillers
-  Secure all points of entry where heroin, fentanyl, and illegal opioids come into our country and make their way to Southern Illinois
-  Empower the DEA and other agencies to hold Big Pharma accountable and change their policies, procedures, and practices that still contribute to the opioid epidemic

**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE  
SAVING SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE AND THOSE WHO SERVE**

**SAVING SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE  
AND THOSE WHO SERVE**

---

Like so many families in Southern Illinois, my family came here when I was a young kid because my dad's job was at the Air Mobility Command, or AMC (then called MAC). My mom became the director of the Scott family support center, where she helped thousands of military families. My family has a long diverse history of military service, but that exposure at a young age to the amazing men and women serving at Scott AFB truly cemented my desire to serve in the Armed Forces.

Scott Air Force Base is a critical hub of Southern Illinois' economy, and we must be proactive in ensuring that it remains so. My belief and commitment to Scott AFB is deep and personal. The men and women who serve, the veterans who stay, the lifelong federal employees and federal retirees who support them and our nation, and the businesses and communities built on their shoulders must be protected at all costs.

Attracting more major military assets is an obvious and proven way to prepare for future base realignments. We cannot allow a horrible mistake, like losing the NGA, to be repeated. We need to fight for investments in our military that will strengthen the role of TRANSCOM and other defense agencies on the base, and support dual civilian/military economic development projects.

---

## **SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**

### **SAVING SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE AND THOSE WHO SERVE**

As a military base and an economic hub, Scott brings many new people to Southern Illinois—people like myself and my own family. We can continuously do better at getting more families to come to Scott and encouraging them to stay. Incentives that aid military spouses find much needed employment help out military families and communities all around the base. We also need to maintain and improve infrastructure around the base to show the decision makers in DC the resiliency, durability, and survivability of Scott AFB if and when there is an attack on the United States and our critical assets. We should strengthen the electric grid, and build support for multiple layers and sources of energy, including solar sources, in and around Scott to ensure that it has the resiliency needed to complete critical missions under extreme circumstances.





We must also support the federal employees and retirees who are at the heart of the greater Scott community. Gutting protections and benefits for these great public servants will only hurt the communities in Southern Illinois that are dependent upon Scott Air Force Base.

Scott and its role in our national security landscape should not be taken for granted. Division breeds instability, and instability breeds insecurity. With good leadership, we can trust Scott and its jobs to remain—but only if we have predictable bipartisan national security policy, budgeting and priorities. We need leaders who will break out of typical party fights and work towards a bipartisan national security mission. Only when we stand united will the 21st century be another American century. We need that, for the future of Scott Air Force Base and the future of the nation.



**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**  
**SAVING SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE AND THOSE WHO SERVE**

**WHEN I SERVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS,  
I'LL WORK WITH ANYONE FROM ANY PARTY TO:**

-  Attract more major military assets to prepare for future base realignments
-  Invest in a more secure electric grid and other, better infrastructure to keep Scott secure and functioning in the event of a national emergency
-  Prevents cuts to the protections and benefits of the public servants that are federal employees that who support Scott AFB, local communities and local businesses
-  Establish a predictable, strong bipartisan national security policy

**SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE**  
**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS, TOGETHER**

**SAVING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS,  
TOGETHER**

---

My sons are thirteen and twenty now. My oldest has left for college, and I wonder—what does he think when he looks back on his Southern Illinois childhood? What will my thirteen year old think, when in ten or twenty years, he remembers what it was like to grow up in Southern Illinois? It depends on the choices we make now.

I've talked with people all around Southern Illinois: the steelworker in Granite City; the farmer in Steeleville; the nurse in Mt. Vernon; the student in Carbondale; the single mom in Cahokia. I've listened as they've shared their thoughts, shared their dreams for their kids, and shared their vision of a Southern Illinois that works for us, not the powerful few. We need a leader who will show courage and break out of the same old party lines. We need a leader who won't avoid the tough decisions—a leader who will bridge the great divide. We will make those thoughts, those dreams, those visions reality. We will rebuild and restore our faith. I have heard you, and now I promise: **I will work with anyone from any party to save Southern Illinois.**

---

## SAVE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: A PLAN BY THE PEOPLE END NOTES

1. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/powerpost/house-republicans-will-not-concede-they-broke-a-fundamental-health-care-promise/2017/05/26/941db9ca-4172-11e7-8c25-44d09ff5a4a8\\_story.html?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.252df85ff067](https://www.washingtonpost.com/powerpost/house-republicans-will-not-concede-they-broke-a-fundamental-health-care-promise/2017/05/26/941db9ca-4172-11e7-8c25-44d09ff5a4a8_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.252df85ff067); [https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/premiums-for-aca-health-insurance-plans-could-jump-90-percent-in-three-years/2018/03/08/1ebb4c44-22e3-11e8-94da-ebf9d112159c\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.905e2384dbbd](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/premiums-for-aca-health-insurance-plans-could-jump-90-percent-in-three-years/2018/03/08/1ebb4c44-22e3-11e8-94da-ebf9d112159c_story.html?utm_term=.905e2384dbbd)
2. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-10-23/americans-are-retiring-later-dying-sooner-and-sicker-in-between>
3. <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Prescription-Drug-Coverage/PrescriptionDrugCovGenIn/index.html>; [https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/factsheets/cong\\_stats/2017/il.pdf](https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/factsheets/cong_stats/2017/il.pdf)
4. [https://www.stltoday.com/news/local/illinois/no-school-for-some-metro-east-students-due-to-boil/article\\_c249d5c5-68a2-5b8d-95a9-d2f38de66cff.html](https://www.stltoday.com/news/local/illinois/no-school-for-some-metro-east-students-due-to-boil/article_c249d5c5-68a2-5b8d-95a9-d2f38de66cff.html)
5. <http://www.bnd.com/news/local/article202810419.html>
6. [https://thesouthern.com/news/local/governor-declares-southern-illinois-counties-disaster-areas-as-water-supplies/article\\_1ca18627-59de-5abd-9326-2d58c02b30c4.html](https://thesouthern.com/news/local/governor-declares-southern-illinois-counties-disaster-areas-as-water-supplies/article_1ca18627-59de-5abd-9326-2d58c02b30c4.html)
7. <https://www.propublica.org/article/hud-is-failing-to-protect-children-from-lead-paint-poisoning-audits-find>
8. <http://news.wsui.org/post/companies-showing-interest-cairo-port-district-project#stream/0>
9. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/andrewdepietro/2017/12/28/cost-of-living-is-surging-in-these-major-cities-and-what-it-could-mean-for-2018/#693b876f71c6>
10. <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/12/18/16791174/republican-tax-bill-congress-conference-tax-policy-center>
11. <https://www.thenation.com/article/does-monopoly-power-explain-workers-stagnant-wages>
12. <https://aflcio.org/paywatch/highest-paid-ceos>
13. <https://www.epi.org/productivity-pay-gap/>
14. <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/ct-bruce-rauner-union-right-to-work-met-20150208-story.html#>
15. <http://www.republictimes.net/group-discusses-four-lane-highway-to-murphysboro/>
16. <http://www.chicagotribune.com/business/ct-biz-minimum-wage-apartment-report-20180613-story.html>
17. <https://www.propublica.org/article/cairo-thebes-hud-long-neglected-these-residents-now-as-they-move-out-some-feel-let-down-again>; <https://www.propublica.org/article/hud-is-failing-to-protect-children-from-lead-paint-poisoning-audits-find>
18. [https://qctimes.com/news/national/the-cities-with-the-highest-murder-rates-in-the-us/collection\\_f9e23283-b22c-5456-ad07-ac46594b9988.html#1](https://qctimes.com/news/national/the-cities-with-the-highest-murder-rates-in-the-us/collection_f9e23283-b22c-5456-ad07-ac46594b9988.html#1)
19. <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/06/26/republican-tax-law-churches-employees-670362>
20. <https://www.bnd.com/news/local/article145737184.html>
21. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/26/us/opioid-crisis-public-health-emergency.html>
22. <https://www.cnn.com/2018/02/12/economic-cost-of-the-opioid-crisis-1-trillion-and-growing-faster.html>
23. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2017/03/09/gop-health-care-bill-would-drop-mental-health-coverage-mandate-covering-1-3-million-americans/?utm\\_term=.e2cedd7440d2](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2017/03/09/gop-health-care-bill-would-drop-mental-health-coverage-mandate-covering-1-3-million-americans/?utm_term=.e2cedd7440d2)
24. <http://time.com/money/4852176/health-care-bill-drug-addiction-treatment/>
25. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/healthcare/news/2017/05/25/433017/cbo-derived-coverage-losses-state-congressional-district/>
26. [https://rsc-walker.house.gov/sites/republicanstudycommittee.house.gov/files/wysiwyg\\_uploaded/RSC%20Budget%20FY2019%20-%20Narrative%20-%20FINAL.PDF](https://rsc-walker.house.gov/sites/republicanstudycommittee.house.gov/files/wysiwyg_uploaded/RSC%20Budget%20FY2019%20-%20Narrative%20-%20FINAL.PDF)
27. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2017/investigations/dea-drug-industry-congress/?utm\\_term=.a088c98e13b9](https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2017/investigations/dea-drug-industry-congress/?utm_term=.a088c98e13b9)
28. <https://stlouis.cbslocal.com/2017/10/18/illinois-states-attorney-may-expand-opioid-crisis-lawsuit/>
29. <http://www.businessinsider.com/sinaloa-cartel-sending-mexican-herion-to-the-us-2017-11>; <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2018/02/20/mexican-cartels-switch-gears-after-u-s-states-relax-u-s-states-legalize-marijuana-mexicos-cartels-sw/343389002/>
30. <https://www.bnd.com/news/local/article145737184.html>
31. <https://www.opensecrets.org/industries/summary.php?ind=H04&cycle=All&recipdetail=H&sortorder=N&mem=Y>

PAID FOR AND AUTHORIZED BY  
BRENDAN KELLY FOR SOUTHERN ILLINOIS