

## Springfield Dispatch

# Lawyer likes having a busy schedule

By Bethany Krajelis  
Law Bulletin staff writer

His law partners call him “TC,” but when Thomas H. Cross III steps into the Capitol, his nickname gets a little more formal.

Known by his colleagues in Springfield as the House Republican Leader, Cross splits his time between representing the 84th District as a lawmaker from Oswego and practicing business law as a principle of Mahoney, Silverman & Cross LLC in Joliet.

“I’ve found a way to juggle and manage it,” Cross said of his dual career. “It can be time consuming, but I enjoy it.”

According to some of the lawyers and lawmakers who work beside Cross, the 51-year-old Alabama native isn’t exaggerating or joking when he says he truly enjoys the busy schedule and hard work.

Cross, who became a lawyer in 1983 and a legislator in 1993, has a genuine passion to not only help his clients and constituents, but improve Illinois, said his law partner George F. Mahoney III.

“You can see his passion,” Mahoney said. “He really cares about people and is committed to helping the people of Illinois.”

Cross, Mahoney and David J. Silverman worked together at the Joliet firm formerly known as



# Dispatch

Continued from page 3

Black said while Cross will give his fellow House Republicans his opinion on pending legislation, he does not lock his caucus into party-line votes.

Besides being a leader who trusts his members, Cross pays attention to the geographic differences of his caucus, Black said.

"He's always thinking about what is best for everyone, whether it's southern Illinois or the suburbs," Black said. "We disagree on educational finance, but he's always willing to listen to me."

Black, who is known for being one of the more outspoken legislators, said while Cross can come off as a quiet person, he speaks up when it's needed.

"When we need the leader of the Republicans to come out and say this is why we oppose, he can be very articulate," Black said.

Cross, who does much of his legislative work off the House floor, said certain situations require his presence in the chamber.

"We have a vision in the minority caucus, and when those ideas and visions are ignored, I have to make our point," Cross said.

When Cross isn't pushing the agenda of his party, he continues to work on legislative issues important to him and his constituents, such as juvenile diabetes research.

Cross' 16-year-old daughter, Reynolds, has diabetes, and he said he often hears from the parents of other

children with diabetes.

"It is really important to me," said Cross, who also has a 13-year-old son, Hudson, with his wife, Genie.

Cross has also been involved in legislation affecting the home foreclosing crisis. In previous sessions, Cross was able to pass several measures to keep children safe from sexual predators on social networking sites, such as MySpace.

When Cross isn't busy working as a lawmaker or lawyer, his priority is family.

"A lot of my time is centered around ball games," Cross said, referring to his son's traveling baseball games and daughter's soccer and tennis matches.

Mahoney, who noted that he is not only Cross' law partner but his friend, said even though Cross has a busy schedule, he tries his hardest to get to as many of his kids' games as possible.

"TC is able to be that passionate lawmaker, but he's also a fun-loving guy," Mahoney said.

Black agreed and said that Cross' attitude is going to take him a long way.

"If Tom wants to go on to statewide office, he's probably well positioned to do that," Black said. "He has the personality and energy it takes to run a statewide office."

And with Cross' law background, Black said, "I don't think attorney general is out of the question."

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