

ICCTA Government Relations and Public Policy Report

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ICCTA ADOPTS 2022 LEGISLATIVE GOALS

At its November 13 meeting, the Illinois Community College Trustees Association's Board of Representatives adopted ICCTA's [state legislative goals for 2022](#):

- Local control of community colleges
- Community college baccalaureate degrees
- Equitable funding for community college operations
- Equity in higher education
- Equity in MAP funding
- Funding for capital construction projects

MARTIN TORRES APPOINTED DEPUTY GOVERNOR FOR EDUCATION

Governor JB Pritzker has promoted **Martin Torres** from assistant deputy governor to **Deputy Governor for Education** following Jesse Ruiz's resignation. Torres worked on Gov. Pritzker's first gubernatorial campaign and then served as a senior policy advisor. Previously, he served as associate director of the Latino Policy Forum.

GRF SURPLUS / GOMB PROJECTS IMPROVED OUTLOOK FOR NEXT 5 FISCAL YEARS

The Governor's office expects a year-end surplus of \$418 million in the state's General Revenue Fund due to higher than expected income and sales tax revenues through the first part of the new fiscal year. However, the state is still projected to run deficits between \$400 million to \$1 billion in the 2025 budget year. Gov. Pritzker proposes using the additional revenues to reduce the unpaid bill backlog and put \$300 million in the state's rainy day fund. The state pension systems have unfunded liabilities totaling \$141 billion, consuming a significant portion of the state budget.

In its annual economic and fiscal policy report, the Governor's Office of Management and Budget forecasts a \$406 million shortfall in the state's general funds for Fiscal Year 2023 (which begins next July 1), down from the \$2.9 billion estimate provided in 2019. The budget gap in the state's general funds for fiscal year 2024 (which begins July 1, 2023) is now projected to be \$820 million, a much lower figure than the \$3.2 billion projected in 2019.

The combined shortfall for those two fiscal years is now expected to be about \$1.2 billion, rather than the earlier forecast of \$6.1 billion — or about \$4.9 billion less. For the following three fiscal years, the report shows deficits of a little over \$1 billion for the 2025 fiscal year, \$903 million for 2026 and \$598 million for 2027.

HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING COMMISSION

The [Commission on Equitable Public University Funding](#) held its first meeting this week to discuss how Illinois public universities are currently funded and explore ideas to ensure that all students can achieve their postsecondary goals. The group, comprised of 33 members, will align with the state's new higher education strategic plan, [A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth](#),

which outlines the need to invest in higher education in a way that is equitable, stable, and sufficient. The commission will recommend data-driven, equity-centered criteria and approaches for a funding model to distribute state resources to public universities. A report is due to the Illinois General Assembly by July 1, 2023. Members include legislators from each caucus, representatives from each public university, the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, and members of educational advocacy groups.

COMMON APP AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS TO APPLY TO ALL ILLINOIS PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

First-year students applying to college will now be able to apply to any of Illinois' 12 public universities, plus dozens of the state's private institutions, with only one form. Three public universities (the University of Illinois at Chicago, Northern Illinois University, and Chicago State University) were previously available on the Common App. A \$1 million state investment enabled the remaining public universities to join the program. The last outstanding university, Northeastern Illinois University, will be implemented this fall.

FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDS COMING TO ILLINOIS

The \$1.2 trillion federal infrastructure bill will send **\$17 billion** to Illinois for projects, with the prospects of billions more from competitive grants. Several legislators are already supporting a projected \$2.7 billion rebuild of the Eisenhower Expressway in Chicago.

According to a White House analysis, the Illinois impact over five years is:

- **\$1.7 billion** to improve drinking and wastewater infrastructure throughout Illinois.
- **\$9.8 billion** for federal highway projects.
- **\$1.4 billion** for bridge replacement and repairs (and the state could receive more if successful in competitive grants).
- **About \$4 billion** to improve public transportation options across the state.
- **At least \$100 million** for broadband coverage across the state. At present, there are about 228,000 Illinoisans who currently do not have broadband. About 2.9 million low-income Illinoisans would receive an internet access benefit.
- **Approximately \$616 million** for airport improvements. Under a new Airport Terminal Improvement program, a \$5 billion funding pool will be in place through September 30, 2030, for the Secretary of Transportation to provide competitive grants for "projects that address the aging infrastructure of the nation's airports."
- **\$149 million** to fund the expansion of the electric charging network in Illinois. Plus, Illinois interests could compete for EV charging grants from a \$2.5 billion pool.
- **\$27 million** to protect against wildfires.
- **\$22 million** to protect against cyberattacks.

2022 CAMPAIGN UPDATES

U.S. Rep. **Rodney Davis** (R) will run for re-election to Congress rather than face Gov. Pritzker in a gubernatorial campaign next November. Billionaire **Ken Griffin** says that he will back a Republican challenger to Gov. Pritzker, although he did not say who he will support. The Governor spent \$171 million of his own money in 2018 against then-incumbent Bruce Rauner. Griffin gave Rauner \$22.5 million in 2018 and spent another \$54 million to defeat the graduated income tax referendum in 2020.

State Rep. **Dan Brady** (R-Bloomington) plans to run for Secretary of State. The Democrat frontrunner is former State Treasurer and Illinois Community College Board chair **Alexi Giannoulas**.

State Rep. **Mark Batinick** (R-Plainfield) has announced his retirement from the General Assembly. He plans to complete his term but will not run for re-election in 2022. His retirement means that House Republicans will lose their floor leader.

State Rep. **John D'Amico** (D-Chicago) resigned from the General Assembly last week. D'Amico, who chaired the House Transportation Vehicles and Safety Committee, is now the political director for the Local 130 Plumber's Union. Sen. **Ram Villivalam**, who also serves as 39th Ward Precinct Committeeman, has the most weighted vote at 45 percent to appoint D'Amico's replacement.

State Rep. **Mike Murphy** (R-Springfield) will resign from the state legislature on December 1 to serve as president and chief executive officer of the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce. His departure avoids a primary contest against State Rep. **Avery Bourne**, (R-Morrisonville) in the newly drawn 108th House District.

Former State Representative and Illinois Department of Natural Resources director **Wayne Rosenthal** (R) plans to run against incumbent Sen. **Steve McClure** in the new 54th Senate District. Rosenthal currently serves on the Lincoln Land Community College board.

Chicago Ald. **Gilbert Villegas** (D) launched the first bid for the newly created heavily Hispanic 3rd Congressional District. Others considering a run include State Sen. **Omar Aquino** and State Rep. Delia Ramirez.

Former Rockford State Representative **Litesa Wallace** (D) launched her campaign for Congress in Illinois' new 17th Congressional District. Former Rockford and Quad Cities TV meteorologist **Eric Sorensen** also announced his run. State Sen. **Steve Stadelman** is still considering a run for this seat. **Esther Joy King** (R), who narrowly lost to incumbent Cheri Bustos in 2020, has already raised considerable funds for her 2022 campaign.

Aaron R. Smith (R), vice chair of the John A. Logan College board, has announced his candidacy for the new 118th House District.

REDISTRICTING LAWSUIT

Rep. **Angelica Guerrero-Cuellar** (D) filed an unusual motion in federal court to intervene as a separate *defendant* in a pair of lawsuits challenging the legislative redistricting plan that was signed into law in September. Guerrero-Cuellar, who represents the largely Latino 22nd District on Chicago's southwest side, is arguing the composition of her district, and therefore her chances of election, could hang in the balance if the court decides to alter the map.

The Illinois Republican Party, NAACP, and MALDEF have submitted proposed alternative legislative maps to a panel of federal judges. A three-judge federal court panel set the **week of December 6** as the time it will hear the consolidated cases challenging the new state legislative district maps. The case is being put

on an expedited schedule in order to accommodate the 2022 election cycle. Under the current schedule, candidates can begin circulating nominating petitions on January 13, 2022, and those petitions must be submitted to the State Board of Elections the week of March 7-14.

COVID UPDATE

Illinois COVID cases are up 29 percent over last week. The numbers have been moving in the wrong direction for about two weeks as people spend more time indoors due to colder weather. The seven-day statewide case positivity rate is 2.5 percent. Of Illinois' total population, a little more than 67 percent have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, and 61 percent of Illinois' total population is fully vaccinated.

CHILDREN AGES 5-11 NOW ABLE TO RECEIVE COVID-19 VACCINE

The Illinois Department of Public Health has adopted the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's recommendation for children ages 5 to 11 receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. IDPH reports that 2,200 providers throughout the state are already enrolled and available to vaccinate children. IDPH staff are also available to assist with school-based vaccination drives around the state. There is no requirement for children to receive a vaccine to attend school. Gov. Pritzker has said that such a requirement would require legislative action.

ACA MARKETPLACE OPEN ENROLLMENT

Open Enrollment for the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Health Insurance Marketplace runs from November 1, 2021 through January 15, 2022, allowing Illinoisans an additional month to enroll. There are 11 carriers for plan year 2022, up from eight in plan year 2021, and five in plan year 2020. The three new health insurance carriers include: Molina Healthcare of Illinois, Inc.; Oscar Health Plan; and UnitedHealthcare of Illinois, Inc. More than 291,000 Illinoisans enrolled in ACA Marketplace health insurance plans during open enrollment last year, and 54,432 more purchased plans during the Special Enrollment Period in response to COVID-19.

For more information on state legislative and public policy issues, please contact:

Illinois Community College Trustees Association

www.communitycolleges.org

