ICCTA Government Relations and Public Policy Report

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The Illinois House returned to Springfield on Friday, and the Senate convened on Sunday for a lame duck session. The primary objectives were to consider: 1) a legislative agenda from the Black Caucus proposals to address systemic racism, and 2) the fight for House Speaker.

The legislature ultimately passed an omnibus **education** bill focused on improving access to quality early-through-post-secondary education for Black and Brown students; four **economic equity** bills that addressed more requirements to the state procurement process to promote contracts with Black-owned businesses, conviction records in hiring and employment actions, housing information on criminal history, racial disparities among various industries, and predatory lending; and a **criminal justice reform** bill eliminating cash bail while prohibiting chokeholds and requiring additional police records and body cameras. The 101st General Assembly adjourned before considering the **healthcare** omnibus bill.

Other bills approved by the General Assembly included a trial-lawyer-backed measure adding **pre-judgment interest** to personal injury cases, expanding the **Chicago Teachers Union's collective bargaining issues**, and amending the **hospital transformation program**. One bill, Senate Bill 1199, that did not pass was the Governor's request to **decouple** the state from some federal tax credits, which he believed would generate $500 million but could be closer to $1 billion. Opponents argued the tax incentives were part of the federal COVID relief program and should not be taken away from taxpayers. No action was taken on renewable energy, ethics, or remote legislating.

All bills passing both houses now go Governor Pritzker for his approval. Any bill that did not pass is now dead. The new 102nd General Assembly, inaugurated into office yesterday, begins its spring session and will introduce all new bills in the coming weeks. Democrats lose one vote in the House but still maintain a strong majority of 73-45, while Senate Democrats add to their majority of 41-18.

HOUSE SPEAKER

House Democrats endured the pressure of selecting a Speaker to lead their caucus and the House chamber this week. Speaker Michael Madigan celebrated the 50th anniversary of his election to the General Assembly -- and his 38th anniversary of becoming Speaker -- by making his case to his colleagues to remain in charge. The four announced candidates (Speaker Madigan, Rep. Stephanie Kifowit, Rep. Kathleen Willis, and Rep. Ann Williams) all pitched to the Democrat caucus and laid out their respective strategies and proposals. Before the first private vote was taken, Rep. Willis withdrew her candidacy.

After the first vote, sources report Madigan fell shorter than expected of the 60 votes needed. Madigan received 51 votes, Williams received 18 votes, Kifowit received 3 votes, and one member voted present. The House Democrat Women's caucus and several other women organizations soon announced they supported a female speaker, giving Williams another boost. The next morning (Monday morning), Speaker Madigan announced he was suspending his bid for Speaker, but not withdrawing. Many viewed this move as another calculated ploy.

The House Black Caucus then put forward their choice to run for Speaker – Rep. Emanuel "Chris" Welch (D-Hillside). Rep. Jay Hoffman (D-Swansea) also opted to jump in the race. Before the next round of voting, Rep. Williams and Rep. Kifowit dropped out. The second round of voting resulted in 50 votes for Welch, 15 votes for Hoffman, and 7 present votes (including Speaker Madigan). The vote was held shortly after opposition research surfaced detailing one charge of domestic violence 19 years ago and two sexual harassment lawsuits filed against Welch in 2010 and 2011.

Yesterday morning, the Democratic Caucus met and voted a third time. Welch improved his standing to 55 votes, 17 voted present, and one didn't vote. With the fourth vote, Welch clinched the title of Speaker of the Illinois House with 69 votes – the first Black Speaker in Illinois. Welch has served in the House since 2013. He is an attorney from Westchester, member of the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus, past chair of the House Higher Education Committee, and most recently chair of the House Executive Committee. We will learn in the coming days about Welch's plan for House Democrat leadership, staff structure, rules, committees, and session calendar.

House Speaker Michael J. Madigan released the following statement Wednesday:

> "As I prepare to pass the Speaker's gavel to a new generation of Democratic leadership, I want to thank the people of my district and the members of the House Democratic Caucus for the faith and trust they have placed in me over the years. I want to thank my staff for their hard work on behalf of every member of this caucus. It has been the honor of a lifetime to help bring people of different experiences and backgrounds together to serve our state.

> "It is time for new leadership in the House. I wish all the best for Speaker-elect Welch as he begins a historic speakership. It is my sincere hope today that the caucus I leave to him and to all who will serve alongside him is stronger than when I began. And as I look at the large and diverse Democratic majority we have built—full of young leaders ready to continue moving our state forward, strong women and people of color, and members representing all parts of our state—I am confident Illinois remains in good hands."

The House formally held elections for leadership on the House floor. All Democrats elected Welch as Speaker of the Illinois House, and all Republicans selected Jim Durkin as Minority Leader. In his acceptance speech, Speaker Welch pledged for unity in moving the state forward and acknowledged the legacy of former Speaker Madigan.

The Senate elected Don Harmon to serve as President of the Illinois Senate and Dan McConchie to serve as Minority Leader.

As of January 13, all previous legislation is "dead," and all bills will be introduced as new legislation. Important dates to remember:
- The LRB request deadline for drafting new bills is **February 5**.
- The deadline for introducing new bills in the Senate is **February 19**.
- The Governor's combined State of the State/Budget Address is scheduled for **February 17**.

As we move into the 102nd General Assembly, we do so with threats of "armed protests" at our State Capitol and to "storm" government offices in every state on President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration day. Security measures have intensified around the Capitol and the BOS Center.

BILLS CONSIDERED DURING LAME DUCK

Passed Both Houses

House Bill 156 by Representative Mike Zalewski (D) extends the Transportation Network Providers Act.

House Bill 570 by Representative Jay Hoffman (D) deals with TIF extensions.

House Bill 2275 by Senator Bill Cunningham allows Chicago Teachers Union to include length of work day and year in collective bargaining and removes impasse procedures.

House Bill 1559 by Senator Bill Cunningham (D), a trailer bill to HB 2275, returns the length of school day and year to permissive collective bargaining for the Chicago Teachers Union.

Education Pillar House Bill 2170 by Senator Kim Lightford (D) focuses on improving the education of minority students, including creating new programs to support early childhood education, creating a task force to support equitable environments in Illinois schools, revising the state's standards for high school students, establishing a six-week summer program to help students in poverty, and enhancing programs to keep Black students from leaving the state to go to college.

House Bill 2451 by Senator Robert Martwick (D) enhances Chicago firefighter pension benefits.

House Bill 2461 by Representative Jay Hoffman (D) deals with land transfers for Bensenville, Springfield, Will County, Northern Illinois University, a public child care facility.

House Bill 2488 by Representative Mike Zalewski (D) allows for electronic health record systems to gain access to the Illinois Prescription Monitoring Program.

House Bill 3360 by Representative Jay Hoffman (D) allows the plaintiff to recover prejudgment interest on all damages in personal injury cases.

Criminal Justice Pillar House Bill 3653 by Representative Justin Slaughter (D) represents the criminal justice omnibus bill from the Black Caucus, ending cash bail in 2023, creating statewide use of force standards, changing incarcerated populations, and addressing decertification.

House Bill 3878 by Representative Terra Costa Howard (D) allows alcohol to be served on trains (Amtrak).

House Bill 4276 by Representative Jay Hoffman (D) an agreed bill, extends sunset of workers' compensation laws providing for rebuttal presumption and pension benefits for COVID.

Senate Bill 54 by Senator Sara Feigenholtz (D) allows for home delivery of alcohol.

Senate Bill 1510 by Senator Heather Steans (D) mandates the Department of Healthcare and Family Services to establish a health care transformation program to create innovative partnerships funded by the transformation pool (annual funding of $150 million), an agreed bill through the Medicaid Working Group. The bill also requires insurance companies to cover routine COVID diagnostic testing at nursing facilities without utilizations management, which was not included in the agreed language by the working group but was initiated by the nursing home industry.

Senate Bill 1530 by Senator Chris Belt (D) extends classification of a "safety-net" hospital to those qualified beginning October 1, 2012.

Economic Pillar
- Senate Bill 1480 by Senator Chris Belt (D) creates a civil rights violation for any employer for using a conviction record as a basis to refuse to hire or any action for recruitment, hiring, promotion, renewal of employment, selection for training or apprenticeship, discharge, discipline, tenure or terms, privileges, or conditions of employment. The bill requires businesses to obtain an equal pay registration certificate and submit Employer Information Reports.

- Senate Bill 1608 by Senator Chris Belt (D) specifies further requirements in the awarding of State contracts concerning diversity and underrepresented groups.

- Senate Bill 1792 by Senator Chris Belt (D) addresses racial disparities among the agriculture, beauty supply, and cannabis industries and caps predatory payday loan rates.

- Senate Bill 1980 by Senator Chris Belt (D) requires housing authorities to collect information concerning the denial of assistance on the basis criminal history records.

Senate Bill 1805 by Cristina Castro (D) allows transfers for Metropolitan Water Reclamation District.

Senate Bill 2527 by Senator Patricia Van Pelt (D) authorizes quitclaim deed for property in Cook County.

Senate Bill 2779 by Senator Linda Holmes (D) changes districts for Fox Valley Park District.

House Resolution 866 by Representative Andre Thapedi (D) calls for an equitable land-use plan that directs funding toward low-income communities for infrastructure, housing, and other economic development.

House Resolution 696 by Representative Carol Ammons (D) calls on Congress to recognize student debt as a crisis.

Passed One Chamber (Now Dead)

[House Bill 97](#) by Senator Rachelle Crowe (D) allows the Supreme Court to employ security officers.

[House Bill 122](#) by Representative Jehan Gordon-Booth (D) deals with cannabis employment and licensing. *Passed Senate*

[House Bill 356](#) by Representative Joyce Mason (D) gives nurses training credit for on-the-job experience during COVID. *Passed Senate*

[House Bill 471](#) by Senator Julie Morrison (D) allows board of directors of a corporation to vote remotely for shareholder meeting. *Passed Senate*

[House Bill 1653](#) by Senator Omar Aquino (D) mandates the Department of Healthcare and Family Services to establish a health care transformation program to create innovative partnerships funded by the transformation pool (annual funding of $150 million), an agreed bill through the Medicaid Working Group. *Passed Senate*

[House Bill 2263](#) by Senator Ann Gillespie (D) requires seclusion rooms and isolated time-outs and restraints in school be used appropriately and creates reporting and oversight on use. *Passed Senate*

[House Bill 3393](#) by Senator Sara Feigenholtz (D) offers COVID recovery provisions for hospitality. *Passed Senate*

Healthcare Pillar [House Bill 3840](#) by Senator Mattie Hunter (D) contains provisions on provider implicit bias, requires the Department on Aging to develop a dementia training program, reduces blood sugar testing materials to a 1 percent sales tax, requires nursing homes and hospitals to test water for Legionella, provides $50 million annually to safety-net hospitals to enhance OB/GYN services, creates a new racial impact note on every bill, creates a Health and Human Services Task Force to undertake review of programs to improve health and human service outcomes, creates Anti-Racism Commission, deals with sickle cell anemia, requires MCOs to cover any provider under contract for any medically necessary service regardless of inclusion on provider lists, requires DHFS to coordinate with FQHCs for care coordination services, creates committee to support billing departments in safety-net hospitals, creates Medicaid Managed Care oversight commission with DHFS and support contracts with women and minority-owned businesses, covers doula services for Medicaid, and requires DHFS to establish a Medicaid Technical Assistance Center. *Passed Senate*

[House Bill 3994](#) by Senator Julie Morrison (D) extends the vote-by-mail actions regarding curbside voting, ballot drop boxes, and mailed-in ballots without postage. *Passed Senate*

[House Bill 4945](#) by Representative Will Davis (D) repeals Blighted Areas Redevelopment Act. *Passed House*

Healthcare Pillar [Senate Bill 558](#) by Representative Camille Lilly (D) captures the Black Caucus' health care omnibus bill, adding funding for community safety-net hospitals to preserve or enhance OB-GYN services, requiring implicit bias training for providers, and adding doula services to Medicaid benefits. More controversial provisions focus on Medicaid's managed care program. Once the current contracts expire for managed care organizations in the Medicaid program, SB 558 would move all 2 million beneficiaries back to a more expensive fee-for-service benefit. *Passed House*

[Senate Bill 2481](#) by Senator Tony Munoz (D) changes tax rates on used motor vehicles and removes the cap on automobile trade-ins. *Passed Senate*

[Senate Bill 3066](#) by Representative Delia Ramirez (D) contains provisions for rental assistance programs, sealing eviction court files, and a temporary COVID stay of certain foreclosure proceedings. *Passed House*

[House Bill 3469](#) by Senator Laura Murphy (D) emergency rules for pandemics by the Secretary of State, reenacts the Restore Illinois Collaborative commission, allows for remote voting for the legislature, and allows the Illinois State Police to extend FOID expiration dates during a pandemic. *Passed Senate*

[Senate Bill 3071](#) by Representative Gregory Harris (D) makes ethics changes on statements of economic interest, appointees serving candidate political committees, fundraisers in Springfield during session, lobbying registration, and legislator code of conduct. The bill imposes a legislator revolving-door prohibition before lobbying. *No vote*

[Senate Bill 1199](#) makes tax changes and extends the South Suburban Brownfields Redevelopment Fund until 2022. This was Governor Pritzker's plan to prevent a loss of up to $1 billion in revenue failed to pass the House. The bill would have blocked a changed to the federal tax code passed by Congress as part of the coronavirus relief plan from applying to state tax bills. *Vote failed in House*

COVID-19 UPDATE & VACCINES
The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) yesterday reported 5,862 new confirmed and probable cases of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Illinois, including 97 additional deaths.

Currently, IDPH is reporting a total of 1,046,030 cases, including 17,840 deaths, in 102 counties in Illinois. The age of cases ranges from younger than one to older than 100 years. Within the past 24 hours, laboratories have reported 76,107 specimens for a total 14,339,584. As of Wednesday night, 3,642 in Illinois were reported to be in the hospital with COVID-19. Of those, 749 patients were in the ICU and 386 patients with COVID-19 were on ventilators.

The preliminary seven-day statewide positivity for cases as a percent of total test from January 6–12, 2021 is 7.3%. The preliminary seven-day statewide test positivity from January 6–12, 2021 is 8.3%.

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is now reporting coronavirus disease (COVID-19) [vaccination data on its website](#), with data to be updated daily and additional data to be provided as available. It is important to note that vaccine distribution figures are reported in real time, while vaccine administration figures are reported with as much as a 72-hour lag.

As of Wednesday night, 703,525 doses of vaccine were delivered to providers in Illinois, including Chicago. In addition, approximately 268,525 doses have been allocated to the federal government's Pharmacy Partnership Program for long-term care facilities. This brings the total Illinois doses to 972,050. IDPH is currently reporting a total of 384,658 vaccines administered, including 48,811 for long-term care facilities. The 7-day rolling average of vaccines administered daily is approximately 25,400 doses.

Illinois is still in Phase 3, Tier 3 of the **governor's reopening plan**, but Governor Pritzker may move regions showing improvement in COVID rates and hospitalizations as early as this Friday. According to the plan, the state can move to Phase 5, resuming normal operations, when a vaccine and/or widespread treatment is available for COVID. The governor has not said when he will deem the state's movement to Phase 5.

All information pertaining to the Coronavirus Response from the Governor's office and agencies can be found here. DCEO regularly updates its Frequently Asked Questions document (available via this link) .

IDVA DIRECTOR LINDA CHAPA LAVIA RESIGNS
Gov. Pritzker announced Monday that Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs Director Linda Chapa LaVia is stepping down. Major General Peter Nezamis, Assistant Adjutant General – Air, IL National Guard will serve as interim director. A permanent director for the department will be named following a nationwide search.

THIRD PARTY AUDITOR AT EXELON
The Illinois EPA hired Synapse Energy Economics to report on the **financial condition of Exelon's nuclear plants** for a third-party report due April 1. The consultant will audit the company's plants to assess costs and revenues projected over the next five years to analyze Exelon's claim that it cannot keep the nuclear stations open with state support. Exelon's nuclear plants are responsible for over half the electricity generated in Illinois and are valuable for their carbon-free emissions.

IBHE ANNOUNCED STRATEGIC PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS
The Illinois Board of Higher Education has announced members of the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee, aimed at developing strategies for achieving the Board's vision of an equitable, accessible, and innovative higher education system in Illinois. Chicago State University President Zaldwaynaka Scott will chair the committee, with Chancellor Juan Salgado of the City Colleges of Chicago, former Illinois State Senator Pat McGuire, and Betsy Ziegler, CEO of 1871. There are 30 other members plus 7 ex-officio members. ICCTA member Martha Burns of Oakton Community College and ICCTA Executive Director Jim Reed will both serve as committee members.

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