



ICCTA Government Relations and Public Policy Report February 5, 2024

The Illinois General Assembly is scheduled to convene on Tuesday, February 6. Legislation is beginning to move through the process, as bills slowly get assigned to committees. Several committees are currently scheduled to meet this week. Expect action to remain slow and even some committees will be cancelled, as members realize some legislation is not quite ready for prime time. The deadline to introduce new legislation is this Friday, February 9.

The biggest anticipated item is the state's Fiscal Year 2025 budget. **Governor JB Pritzker** is scheduled to deliver his budget proposal in conjunction with his State of the State address to the General Assembly on Wednesday, February 21. The Governor's Office of Management and Budget issued a report in November projecting that the state could face a budget deficit next year of \$891 million, assuming revenue trends remain stable, and the state continues making all of its required payments into its rainy-day fund and pension funds.

*****Please review [ICCTA's BILL LIST](#).**

It is vital that we know your positions so that legislation does not slip through unopposed.***

KEY 2024 SESSION DATES FOR THE 103RD ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- February 9: Deadline – Introduction of House & Senate Bills
Legislative Reference Bureau Amendment Requests Begin
- February 21: Governor's State of the State/Budget Address
- March 10: Deadline – Senate Bills out of Senate Committee
- March 19: Primary Election
- April 5: Deadline – House Bills out of House Committee
- April 12: Deadline – Third Reading Senate Bills in the Senate
- April 19: Deadline – Third Reading House Bills in the House
- May 2: ICCTA Lobby Day
- May 3: Deadline – House Bills out of Senate Committee & Senate Bills out of House Committee
- May 17: Deadline – Third Reading House Bills in Senate & Senate Bills in House
- May 24: Adjournment
- May 25-31: *Contingent Session Days for the Budget*

GOP LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENTS

Rep. Amy Elik (R-Alton) and **Rep. Dan Ugaste** (R-Geneva) have been selected to join House Republican **Leader Tony McCombie's** (R-Savanna) leadership team.

EFFORT CONTINUES TO KEEP FORMER PRESIDENT TRUMP OFF ILLINOIS BALLOT

A bid to block former President **Donald Trump** from Illinois' March 19 primary ballot has moved to state court, where challengers to the likely 2024 Republican nominee are hoping to move quickly in a case expected to make its way to the Illinois Supreme Court. The Illinois State Board of Elections unanimously voted to reject the challenge to Trump's candidacy, setting the stage for the new court battle. A group of objectors went on to file a petition for judicial review in Cook County Circuit Court, insisting that Trump should be barred from the ballot "for having engaged in insurrection having previously sworn an oath to uphold the U.S. Constitution." The state election board rejected the challenge on the grounds that the panel lacked statutory authority to determine whether Trump violated the 14th Amendment, which prohibits insurrectionists from seeking public office.

REVISITING BIPA

Sen. **Bill Cunningham** (D-Chicago) has introduced [Senate Bill 2979](#) to reform Illinois's controversial Biometric Information Privacy Act in an effort to safeguard businesses and employees from costly lawsuits. BIPA protects individuals' privacy rights by imposing strict requirements on how businesses and other organizations can collect, store, and use biometric data. Following several court rulings in the past several years, the application of the law has expanded, leading critics in the business community to argue that it opened them up to significant legal liability. The legislation proposes reforms to address this issue by limiting the number of claims that can be brought against a company for a single biometric identifier collected in the same manner. Instead of facing penalties on a per-collection basis, businesses would accrue liability on a per-employee basis, mitigating the financial burden of multiple claims. Additionally, the bill modernizes the process of obtaining consent by allowing the use of electronic signatures, a practice that has become commonplace since BIPA was initially enacted in 2008.

PAID LEAVE FOR ALL WORKERS ACT WEBINARS

The Illinois Department of Labor is continuing to host webinars about the new Paid Leave for All Workers Act. The webinars will be held on the following dates:

- Thursday, February 8, 2024, at 10 a.m. CT;
- Thursday, February 22, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. CT;
- Thursday, March 7, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. CT; and,
- Thursday, March 21, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. CT.

Beginning January 1, 2024, employers are required to post a physical notice on the premises where other notices are posted that summarizes the Act and includes information about filing a complaint.

HEALTH BENEFITS FOR IMMIGRANT ADULTS AND SENIORS PROGRAM UPDATE

New copays and coinsurance for existing enrollees in the Health Benefits for Immigrant Seniors and Health Benefits for Immigrant Adults programs will go into effect on February 1. Most services covered by the HBIA and HBIS programs, which provide health care coverage for individuals who would be eligible for Medicaid coverage if not for their immigration status, will continue to be free for customers, including primary care visits, prescription medications, and vaccinations at a pharmacy or doctor's office. The new copays and coinsurance will apply to the use of non-emergency hospital or surgical center services, like nonemergent elective surgeries, physical therapy, and lab work. Many HBIA and HBIS participants will be transitioning to managed care plans over the next several months.

STATE PARTNERS WITH GOOGLE TO LAUNCH NEW CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH PORTAL

Gov. Pritzker, executives from Google Public Sector, and state legislators recently gathered at Google's Fulton Market office in Chicago to announce the launch of a new centralized portal, powered by Google AI and cloud computing technology, for children's mental health care. The portal, called BEACON, is slated to launch this summer. The Governor said that a centralized hub will make finding behavioral health resources much easier for parents and providers. The platform will be accessible to parents, relevant health care providers, and educators to monitor what services children may be eligible for from the state. The announcement of BEACON follows last year's release of the "Blueprint for Transformation," an executive report on children's mental health care commissioned by Gov. Pritzker's Children's Behavioral Health Transformation Initiative.

CHICAGO WATER INNOVATION HUB RECEIVES \$160 MILLION FEDERAL GREAT LAKES GRANT

A Chicago-area water innovation hub, Current, has been selected to receive a \$160 million innovation grant from the U.S. National Science Foundation Regional Innovation Engine program for its Great Lakes ReNEW initiative. ReNEW, which was backed by six Great Lakes States, is also supported by Argonne National Laboratory, the University of Chicago, and over 50 other partner organizations and focuses on sustainable water innovation solutions. The focus of ReNEW's application was removing forever chemicals, including PFAS, from the water supply to ensure long-term safe water consumption for the Great Lakes Region. Under ReNEW's proposal, chemicals and minerals removed from wastewater would also be repurposed by American manufacturers for battery production and other materials-heavy products.

Beyond research, ReNEW will also connect partners across workforce development systems, from community-based organizations to credentialing programs, community colleges, and universities to provide training and careers for individuals most affected by joblessness and systemic barriers to participation.

LT. GOV. STRATTON LAUNCHES HEALING-CENTERED TASK FORCE

Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton has unveiled the Illinois Healing-Centered Task Force, a new initiative established by [SB 646](#), aimed at steering Illinois towards becoming a more trauma-informed and healing-centered state by collaborating with community stakeholders. The IHCTF's mission includes coordinating existing projects, identifying the repercussions of intergenerational trauma, and formulating preventive solutions. Moreover, it will gather community feedback to inform legislators on integrating trauma-informed principles into policymaking.

ILLINOIS LAWMAKERS, EXPERTS HOPE TO TACKLE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKER SHORTAGE

Industry leaders recently told a joint committee of state lawmakers that over 25% of adults in Illinois reported significant symptoms of anxiety or depression last year. However, there are not enough providers to meet the growing demand for care. State lawmakers expressed a desire to pass plans this spring to help recruit and retain behavioral health care providers – namely mental health care, addiction recovery, and trauma support services.

SPARTA'S WORLD SHOOTING COMPLEX TO HOST GRAND AMERICAN EVENT

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Amateur Trapshooting Association have signed a contract extension that clears the way for the World Shooting and Recreational Complex in Sparta to host the ATA Grand American through 2036. The Grand American, the largest and oldest shooting event of its kind, features more than 20 events and attracts more than 5,000 competitors and spectators from across the globe annually. The event, which was first hosted at the World Shooting Complex in 2006, has an estimated

economic impact of \$25 million to \$30 million annually. The 2024 Grand American is set for July 31 to August 10. More than 4 million targets will be thrown during the event.

NEW ILLINOIS HIGHWAY MAP

The Illinois Department of Transportation has released a new Illinois Official Highway Map. The map includes route updates, detailed sections devoted to cities from Zion and Cairo, as well as a feature that shows mileage between towns and marked route junctions to assist travelers as they explore Illinois.

DCEO, IMEC LAUNCH MADE IN ILLINOIS GRANT PROGRAM

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and the Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center have announced a \$1 million funding initiative aimed at invigorating the state's manufacturing sector. The Made in Illinois grant program will provide up to \$50,000 in matching grant funding to small- and mid-sized manufacturers in Illinois to fuel innovation and strategic advancements within their industries. To qualify for the program, companies must be Illinois manufacturers with 5-250 employees, operating in the state for at least three years, and with documented sales revenue within the last 12 months. Applications are open until March 31, 2024.

CEI LAUNCHES TRAINING ACADEMY FOR STATE EMPLOYEES

The Illinois Commission on Equity and Inclusion has launched an online training academy to equip state employees with the knowledge to foster equity and inclusion within the state's procurement processes. The inaugural offering, titled "CEI's Role in Procurement: A Comprehensive Review," is hosted on OneNet. Participants with Illinois.gov email credentials will delve into the core tenets of CEI's mission, statutory background, and its role in shaping the state's procurement landscape.

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

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