



Illinois Community College Trustees Association

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND PUBLIC POLICY REPORT

March 31, 2025

It was a slow week at the State Capitol last week. Only the House was in session; representatives were scheduled to be in Springfield for four days but ended up cancelling two of them.

This week, only the Senate is scheduled to be in session from Tuesday, April 1, through Friday, April 4. This is an adjustment of the calendar due to the municipal elections taking place tomorrow (Tuesday, April 1). Committee schedules will be adjusted so that committees meet on different days and at different times than most weeks.

The Third Reading deadline to pass House and Senate bills is Friday, April 11. Legislative staffs would like to see any amendments filed by this Friday, April 4, so that they have adequate time to review before the deadline week begins April 7.

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

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

KEY 2025 SESSION DATES FOR THE 104TH ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- **Week of March 31** – Senate ONLY in session
- **Week of April 7** – BOTH chambers in session
 - **April 11** – Third Reading Deadline (House & Senate)
- **Week of April 14** – Spring Break – NO session
- **Week of April 21** – House ONLY in session
- **Week of April 28 through Adjournment** – BOTH chambers in session
 - **May 7: ICCTA LOBBY DAY**
 - **May 9** – Committee Deadline (House & Senate)
 - **May 23** – Third Reading Deadline (House & Senate)
- **May 31** – Adjournment

PRITZKER DECLARES APRIL AS ILLINOIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE MONTH

Gov. JB Pritzker has declared April 2025 as **ILLINOIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE MONTH** “in honor of the Illinois Community College System and the significant contribution these institutions are making to every student, every community, and our state.” The full text of the proclamation can be viewed [HERE](#).

ICCTA, the Illinois Community College Board, and the Illinois Community College Marketing Collaborative will be featuring Community College Month stories on social media throughout the month of April, using the hashtags [#4everystudent4everycommunity](#), [#ilcommunitycollegeproud](#), and [#CCMonth](#).

ISU FACULTY FILE INTENT TO STRIKE NOTICE

Faculty members at Illinois State University have filed a Notice of Intent to Strike with the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board, initiating a 10-day period after which a strike could commence as early as April 4 if contract

negotiations remain unresolved. The United Faculty of ISU union cites ongoing disputes over faculty workloads, compensation, parental and caregiver leave policies, and student mental health support as key issues. While the intent to strike has been filed, it does not guarantee that a strike will occur. Both parties are continuing negotiations in hopes of reaching an agreement before the April 4 deadline.

U OF I AFSCME WORKERS RALLY FOR HIGHER WAGES

University of Illinois employees represented by AFSCME rallied in Springfield last week, arguing that many staff members are earning at or near the poverty level. Workers gathered to demand fair pay, citing rising living costs and insufficient salary increases. The union is pushing for more equitable wages in ongoing contract negotiations, emphasizing the essential roles these employees play in campus operations. University officials have stated they are committed to continued dialogue with the union to reach a fair agreement.

PRITZKER LEADS TRADE MISSION TO MEXICO

Gov. Pritzker, along with state agency leaders, lawmakers, and business executives (a 70-member delegation), is leading a trade mission to Mexico from March 30 to April 2. The delegation will focus on expanding collaboration in key sectors like agriculture, manufacturing, and finance. Mexico remains Illinois' second-largest export market, with bilateral trade exceeding \$32 billion in 2024. The trip aims to build on this strong relationship by attracting new investments, supporting Illinois businesses, and fostering economic growth. State officials will also highlight Illinois' infrastructure, workforce, and economic opportunities.

SENATE SUB-COMMITTEE DEBATES PROCUREMENT BILLS

The Senate Procurement Committee recently convened to review multiple bills covering construction practices, veteran-owned businesses, environmental regulations, and data center incentives.

- **Construction & Labor Agreements:**
 - **SB2317 (Ellman):** Proposes raising the threshold for contracts requiring Illinois Department of Transportation approvals from \$250,000 to \$750,000 to expedite construction projects.
 - **SB1539 (Villivalam):** Requires the Suburban Bus Board to adopt responsible bidding rules to ensure compliance with worker safety and labor laws.
 - **SB74 (Preston):** Proposes to eliminate outdated state agency payment withholdings from contractors.
- **Veteran Support:**
 - **SB101 (Porfirio):** Establishes a 3% set-aside goal for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses and Veteran-Owned Small Businesses, addressing challenges veterans face navigating complex certification systems.
- **Environmental Protections:**
 - **SB2157 (Ventura):** Bans the state's procurement of goods from deforested areas and restricts the use of tropical hardwoods, promoting sustainability and combating climate change.
- **Data Center Incentives:**
 - **SB2502 (Collins):** Offers procurement bonuses for companies storing data in Illinois, with additional incentives for establishing data centers in low-income areas. Some questioned adding incentives beyond existing tax benefits.

SENATE SUB-COMMITTEE DEBATES GAMING LEGISLATION

The Senate Executive: Gaming, Wagering, and Racing Subcommittee reviewed multiple gaming bills last week, sparking debate over potential market oversaturation and increased gambling addiction. Key bills under discussion include SB 1349 and SB 2145, both sponsored by Sen. Bill Cunningham (D-Chicago). SB 1349 would

eliminate limitations on online sports wagering licenses, while SB 2145 would allow expanded fantasy sports contests. Supporters argue the measures would simplify the licensing process, but opponents worry about reduced casino investments.

During the hearing, Sen. Cristina Castro (D-Elgin) called into question how the Illinois Lottery is allowed to feature games on its website titled as "slots." She criticized the Department for bypassing the General Assembly to provide online slots. "We never authorized or allowed you to do this," she said. Illinois Lottery Director Harold Mays said that just because they are called slots in the title doesn't mean that they are actual slot games.

Additionally, Cunningham introduced SB 2398 and SB 2399 to regulate online gaming. The bills would prohibit AI-driven microbets, enforce responsible gaming measures like deposit limits, and require affordability checks for large deposits. Legislators emphasized the need for consumer protection as Illinois' gaming landscape continues to evolve.

SENATE SUB-COMMITTEE DEBATES HEMP BEVERAGE REGULATIONS

The Senate Executive Liquor Subcommittee debated SB 1766 (Cunningham), which would regulate intoxicating hemp beverages under the same three-tier system used for alcohol. Proponents argued that the bill would enhance public safety and ensure proper taxation, while opponents expressed concerns about restricting market access for small businesses and creating inconsistent regulations across the hemp industry by only regulating beverages. State Sen. Jil Tracy (R-Quincy) suggested adding caffeine content regulations. The subcommittee also discussed SB 2052 (Feigenholtz) to make the "cocktails to-go" program permanent and SB 2085 (Harriss) to establish safety standards for alcohol-infused ice cream.

HFS FILES EMERGENCY RULES TO END IMMIGRANT HEALTHCARE BENEFITS

The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services has filed Emergency Rules that would end the Health Benefits for Immigrant Adults program effective July 1, 2025. The program, known as HBIA, provides state-subsidized healthcare coverage for immigrants 42-64 years of age that do not have access or cannot afford health insurance. The Governor's proposed Fiscal Year 2026 budget does not fund the program, although whether to appropriate the program for the coming FY26 is subject to the budget negotiation process within the General Assembly.

ILLINOIS SOLAR FOR ALL ANNUAL EVALUATION

The Illinois Power Agency has released its [Illinois Solar for All Program Year 5 Annual Evaluation Report](#). The report details overall program metrics, projects approved, and economic and job impacts. IPA will hold a webinar to present the report on April 8 from 1-2 PM (register [here](#)).

ILLINOIS FACES \$125 MILLION LOSS IN FEDERAL INFECTIOUS DISEASE FUNDING

The Trump Administration has rescinded \$125 million in federal grants previously awarded to the Illinois Department of Public Health and 97 local health departments, originally allocated to support infectious disease prevention and response efforts. Additionally, **\$324 million in future funding has been blocked**, jeopardizing long-term investments in disease surveillance, laboratory upgrades, vaccination programs, and public health workforce development. Gov. Pritzker and IDPH Director Dr. Sameer Vohra condemned the decision, warning that it will severely impact Illinois' ability to monitor and respond to outbreaks like COVID-19, measles, and avian flu.

....AND A \$28 MILLION LOSS IN FEDERAL FUNDS FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE

The federal government has also announced plans to terminate up to \$28 million in funding for Illinois that supports mental health and substance use disorder treatment. The funding, allocated through the American Rescue Plan Act, has been used by 77 community-based organizations to provide crisis response services, recovery homes, and youth mental health support. State officials criticized the decision, warning it could undermine progress in behavioral health recovery and increase strain on local services.

RAOUL LEADS COALITION AGAINST ALLEGED TRUMP ADMINISTRATION RETALIATION

Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul led a coalition of 21 attorneys general in condemning alleged efforts by the Trump administration to intimidate legal professionals. In an open letter, they accused the administration of targeting law firms for representing clients or pursuing cases against the government. The coalition criticized executive orders that reportedly revoked security clearances, canceled contracts, and mandated intrusive investigations into diversity programs. AG Raoul reaffirmed support for legal professionals facing political retribution, emphasizing the importance of upholding the rule of law. The letter also condemned attacks on federal judges and called for unity within the legal community against intimidation tactics.

MAYOR JOHNSON INTRODUCES NEW ECONOMIC PLAN: BUILD BETTER TOGETHER

Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson announced a new economic development strategy at the groundbreaking for 117 units of mixed-income housing at 79 W. Monroe Street. The strategy, called [Build Better Together](#), will focus on three foundational pillars -- quality and affordable housing, business innovation and job growth, and neighborhood investments and vibrant communities. Build Better Together will involve the city's departments of Planning and Development, Housing, Cultural Affairs and Special Events, and Business Affairs and Consumer Protection, as well as World Business Chicago to strengthen cross-collaboration between public-private partnerships.

ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT EXPANDS FREE REMOTE ACCESS TO COURT RECORDS

Starting May 1, the public will have free remote access to non-confidential documents from the Illinois Supreme Court and appellate courts via the [re:SearchIL](#) portal. Documents filed in cases initiated on or after April 1 will be available. The electronic access fee under Supreme Court Rule 313(c) is suspended until further notice. Chief Justice Mary Jane Theis highlighted the move as a step toward greater transparency and accessibility.

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

Illinois Community College Trustees Association

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