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**ICCTA Government Relations and Public Policy Report**  
**April 16, 2024**  
**APRIL IS COMMUNITY COLLEGE MONTH**

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This week, the Illinois House meets Monday through Friday. The 3rd Reading deadline for House bills to pass out of the House is Friday, April 19. Meanwhile, the Senate meets Tuesday through Friday. Last Friday was the Senate’s deadline to pass substantive Senate bills out of the Senate. The Senate passed 244 bills, although more have received deadline extensions. That number includes an “agreed bill list” passed by a vote of 59-0 that contained about 90 bills.

**\*\*\*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 103<sup>RD</sup> ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

- 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*

**BIPA UPDATE**

The Senate has approved the first major change to Illinois’ Biometric Information Privacy Act since it was originally passed in 2008. A year ago, the Illinois Supreme Court urged state lawmakers to clarify a law that led to several multi-million-dollar settlements with tech companies over the collection of Illinoisans’ biometric data. [Senate Bill 2979](#) (Cunningham), which passed 46-13, would change BIPA’s violation accrual so that each initial collection of a fingerprint or other biometric data would amount to one violation, rather than a violation occurring for each individual scan.

**OTHER BILLS ON THE MOVE**

Also moving to the House:

- [SB 2639](#) (Hastings) enhances Illinois' requirement to cover infertility treatments.
- [SB 3686](#) (Koehler) requires businesses that sell or distribute batteries to develop a recycling stewardship program.
- [SB 2662](#) (Morrison) prohibits the advertising, marketing or promoting of an electronic cigarette in a manner that is likely to cause an adult to mistake it for an object that is not a tobacco product.

- [SB 3098](#) (Loughran Cappel) prohibits electronic cigarettes purchased by mail, online or through other remote sale methods from being shipped to anyone under the age of 21 in the state other than a distributor or retailer.
- [SB 2933](#) (Stadelman) prohibits consumer reporting agencies from including medical debt in their reports.
- [SB 2737](#) (Faraci) makes non-compete clauses unenforceable for licensed professionals who provide mental health services to veterans and first responders.
- [SB 2641](#) (Holmes) aims to improve insurance network adequacy by requiring insurers to provide documentation to the Department of Insurance on whether in-network hospitals have a sufficient number of specialists.
- [SB 2764](#) (D Turner) makes changes to the Auto Contract Renewal Act.
- [SB 3741](#) (Morrison) prohibits insurance companies from requiring prior authorizations for medications used to treat substance abuse disorders.

### **SHEEHAN APPOINTED TO OZINGA VACANCY**

**State Rep. Tim Ozinga** (R-Mokena) resigned from his position effective immediately, according to a letter he sent to House officials last week. Ozinga is co-owner and executive vice president of Mokena-based Ozinga Bros. Inc., and will continue to lead the Will County Republican Central Committee. Local Republicans appointed **Patrick Sheehan** to fill the vacancy for the 37th District. Sheehan, a police officer with almost two decades of experience, also has a background in local governance, having served as a Lockport Alderman and Park Commissioner. Sheehan ran against Sen. Mike Hastings in 2022 and lost.

### **SIU SYSTEM HONORED FOR ADVANCING ANTI-RACISM, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

Southern Illinois University will be recognized as a leading institution in anti-racism work during Weill Cornell's Diversity Week activities. Dr. Sheila Caldwell, SIU system vice president of anti-racism, diversity, equity and inclusion, announced at SIU'S Board of Trustees meeting that the school has been invited to present about ADEI all over the country, including Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, Dallas, and Boston.

### **STATE EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE COSTS RISE 16.5%**

Lawmakers received a [new report](#) showing a 16.5% increase, or \$533 million, in state employee health insurance costs – the largest single-year increase in several years and one that analysts said is due in part to new coverage mandates. The report did not provide details of the specific mandates driving the cost increases, but it mentioned “medications not otherwise guaranteed to be covered, such as certain weight-loss medications” as among the factors.

### **STATE WATCHDOG FINDS \$7.2 MILLION IN IMPROPER PPP LOANS**

A state watchdog is continuing to investigate public employees who claimed millions of dollars from the federal Paycheck Protection Program intended for struggling businesses during the COVID pandemic. The Office of Executive Inspector General has found 277 cases of wrongdoing involving PPP loans, which were typically forgiven, meaning they did not have to be repaid. The investigators focused on loans of more than \$20,000 and found about \$7.2 million in improper ones. Most of the confirmed fraud cases — 175 — involved Illinois Department of Human Services employees. There were 31 cases in the Department of Corrections, 27 in the Department of Children and Family Services, and three in the Illinois State Police.

## **NEW ILLINOIS GROCERY INITIATIVE GRANT OPPORTUNITY**

A new program from the Illinois Grocery Initiative -- the New Stores in Food Deserts Program -- will offer competitive grants to encourage the establishment of new grocery stores in USDA-defined food deserts. Paired with the Equipment Upgrades Program, the initiatives are a \$20 million effort to address food deserts and prevent grocery store closures in Illinois. Awards can range from \$160,000 to \$2.4 million, with a 1:3 match requirement from businesses. Qualified entities include units of local government and independent grocers or cooperatives with fewer than 500 employees and no more than four grocery locations. New Stores in Food Deserts grants will fund construction and renovation costs for new stores, as well as many first-year operations costs, such as employee wages, utility costs, initial inventory of food, and more.

## **DPH AWARDS ABORTION PROVIDER CAPACITY BUILDING GRANTS**

The Illinois Department of Public Health has awarded \$2 million to three organizations to provide training aimed at increasing provider capacity and access for reproductive care in Illinois. The grant provided to Midwest Access Project will expand its work providing sexual and reproductive healthcare clinicians with training in procedural and medication abortion. Its training model fills gaps nationwide in medical education, advanced practice nursing, midwifery education, and clinical training. Planned Parenthood of Illinois plans to expand training efforts by offering more procedural abortion training for physician trainees and advance practice nurses, and medication abortion training for eligible providers. The University of Illinois-Chicago College of Nursing will establish a training program to expose new advanced practice nurses to abortion care through the Reproductive Advocacy and Diversity in Advanced Nursing Training Fellowship.

## **CHICAGO 'FOUR-PILLAR PLAN' TO ADDRESS CITYWIDE ROBBERIES AND CAR THEFTS**

Chicago police officials have unveiled a "four-pillar plan" to address car thefts and robberies, which have remained stubbornly high in recent years. Police officials joined Mayor Brandon Johnson and Ald. Pat Dowell to announce the plan, which utilizes technology, focus missions, public engagement, and accountability. Through weekly data-driven meetings between patrol units and detectives, resources are deployed to areas where robberies and car thefts are being committed. So far this year, the Vehicular Hijacking Task Force has conducted 10 operations, resulting in more than 80 arrests and the recovery of more than 140 stolen or hijacked vehicles. In addition, Chicago Police Supt. Larry Snelling announced a partnership with Hyundai and Kia to host vehicle safety days during the first week of May at Guaranteed Rate Field, where eligible owners can get software updates to help prevent vehicle thefts. Along with the updates, vehicle owners can also receive catalytic converter etchings and steering wheel clubs.

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

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