



Illinois Community College Trustees Association

## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND PUBLIC POLICY REPORT

April 23, 2025

*The Illinois House returns to session today. The Senate will return next week. The House will begin to hear committee testimony on Senate bills that are now in the House. There are also several committee hearings scheduled to consider "subject matter only" topics, including: the federal SAVE Act and other elections bills, Chicago area transit, "compassionate release" from the Illinois Department of Corrections, the impact of health insurance cost increases on school district budgets, mental health and gun violence, the impacts of tariffs on the state of Illinois, and multiple hearings to discuss appropriations requests.*

**\*\*\*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 104<sup>TH</sup> ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- **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

### JURY DELIBERATES IN SEN. EMIL JONES III BRIBERY TRIAL

As of Tuesday, April 22, the jury in the federal corruption trial of Illinois State Sen. Emil Jones III continues deliberations. The case centers on allegations that Jones accepted bribes from red-light camera executive Omar Maani in exchange for legislative favors. Jones, a Democrat from Chicago's South Side, has served in the Illinois Senate since 2009, succeeding his father, former Senate President Emil Jones Jr.

### GOVERNORS OPPOSE FEDERAL RULE THREATENING STATE HEALTH INSURANCE MARKETPLACES

On April 15, Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker, along with Governors Jared Polis (CO), Wes Moore (MD), Michelle Lujan Grisham (NM), and Tina Kotek (OR), issued a joint letter to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services opposing the proposed "Marketplace Integrity and Affordability" rule. The governors argue that the rule would restrict states' abilities to manage their health insurance marketplaces, leading to consumer confusion, reduced enrollment options for low-income families, and increased healthcare costs. They urge the withdrawal of the proposed rule to maintain state flexibility and protect access to affordable healthcare coverage.

### ISBE LAUNCHES STATEWIDE NUMERACY PLAN TO BOOST MATH PROFICIENCY

The Illinois State Board of Education is developing a comprehensive statewide numeracy plan aimed at elevating student math performance to match gains seen in literacy. A needs assessment survey open from April 16–30 will guide the effort, with results shaping discussions at a summer Numeracy Summit. The final plan is expected to be approved by June 2026.

## **SENATE TO BEGIN ENERGY HEARINGS**

The Illinois Senate is set to begin subject matter hearings on Illinois energy needs and other related issues. Discussions will be organized into three key categories:

1. Energy Efficiency
2. Data Centers
3. Additional Illinois Commerce Commission Authority - Topics include transmission development, energy storage, and changes to Renewable Portfolio Standards caps.

## **MAYOR JOHNSON SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER TACKLING CITY BUDGET DEFICIT**

Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson signed an Executive Order directing the Office of Budget and Management to evaluate city operations and identify revenue strategies to address Chicago's structural budget deficit. Citing rising pension and personnel costs and potential federal funding cuts, Johnson announced the formation of a diverse working group—including business, civic, nonprofit, labor, and city council leaders—to deliver preliminary recommendations by August 2025 and a final report by May 2026.

## **ILLINOIS FILM INDUSTRY SEES SECOND-HIGHEST SPENDING YEAR IN 2024**

Gov. Pritzker that announced film production expenditures in Illinois hit \$653 million in 2024, the second highest in state history. The industry rebounded strongly after the 2023 actors' strike, with \$351 million going to wages and 18,200 hires. Pritzker credited extended tax incentives and new grant programs for the growth, while industry leaders highlighted the importance of TV commercials and minority inclusion in sustaining jobs and driving equity. Labor unions also applauded the state's investments for supporting well-paying, union-backed film jobs.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS URGE FASTER SOLAR PERMITTING TO BOOST ADOPTION IN ILLINOIS**

A new report from Environment Illinois, Illinois PIRG, and Frontier Group highlights that lengthy and inefficient permitting processes are discouraging Illinois homeowners from installing rooftop solar panels. The groups advocate for instant online permitting—such as the U.S. Department of Energy's SolarAPP+—to cut costs, reduce delays, and streamline the switch to clean energy. They support Senate Bill 2395 (Cunningham) and House Bill 3265 (Evans, Jr.), which would require local governments to adopt automated permitting systems. Experts say that this shift could save families up to \$4,100 and lead to over 290,000 new solar installations by 2040.

## **PRITZKER LEADS GOVERNORS IN E10 FUEL WAIVER**

Gov. Pritzker and seven other Midwest governors have sent a joint letter to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency urging an extension of the emergency E15 fuel waiver to include E10 gasoline. Without the waiver, infrastructure and supply challenges could result in higher fuel prices and limited availability, especially in southern Illinois.

## **RAOUL HIGHLIGHTS REVENUE GAINS, EXPANDING RESPONSIBILITIES IN FY26 BUDGET PROPOSAL**

Attorney General Raoul recently presented his proposed Fiscal Year 2026 budget to the Senate Appropriations Committee, emphasizing that his office has generated \$23.47 in revenue for every \$1 of taxpayer funding since 2019. He also outlined growing responsibilities, including overseeing child support enforcement attorneys transferred from the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services and pursuing federal litigation. In 2024 alone, his office responded to nearly 19,000 consumer fraud complaints. Raoul is requesting additional funding to support vital services and expand legal efforts defending Illinoisans' rights and state interests.

## OTHER ATTORNEY GENERAL NEWS

- Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul announced that \$24 million from Illinois' settlement with Juul Labs will support the Truth Initiative's youth vaping prevention and cessation programs. Funds will expand access to the EX Program—a mobile-based quitting tool developed with the Mayo Clinic—and the "Vaping: Know the Truth" curriculum for middle and high school students. The initiative also includes events promoting vape-free lifestyles at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and Knox College.
- The state of Illinois will receive a \$12 million settlement from Direct Energy over allegations of deceptive business practices that led Illinois consumers to pay significantly more than public utility rates. The settlement includes a 12-month ban on Direct Energy marketing or enrolling new Illinois customers. Eligible customers who received power from the company between 2013 and 2025 will receive restitution based on their usage.
- AG Raoul has filed a complaint with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, seeking a rerun of the 2025–2026 PJM electricity capacity auction under revised rules. Raoul argues that the original process was flawed and would raise ComEd customer rates by 594%, costing the average household an additional \$10.50 per month starting June 2025. He emphasized that FERC has already approved rule changes for future auctions and urged their immediate implementation to protect consumers. Maryland and New Jersey also joined the complaint.
- A bipartisan coalition of 39 attorneys general (including Illinois AG Raoul) are calling on Congress to prohibit pharmacy benefit managers and their parent companies from owning pharmacies. The group argues PBM ownership harms patients and independent pharmacies by inflating costs and limiting choice. The coalition seeks federal action to ensure transparency and restore fairness to the prescription drug market.
- AG Raoul also joined a coalition of 21 attorneys general in filing a brief opposing former President Donald Trump's attempt to fire two Federal Trade Commission commissioners. The brief emphasizes the FTC's century-long role in consumer protection and its bipartisan structure, warning that allowing presidential removals could jeopardize the agency's independence and effectiveness. Raoul highlighted the FTC's valuable state partnerships, including efforts to block the Kroger-Albertsons merger.

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

### **Illinois Community College Trustees Association**

401 E. Capitol Avenue, Suite 200 • Springfield, IL 62701 • 217-528-2858 • [www.communitycolleges.org](http://www.communitycolleges.org)

