



ICCTA Government Relations and Public Policy Report May 20, 2024

Last Friday (May 17) was the deadline for Third Reading passage, although deadline extensions were granted in both chambers of the Illinois General Assembly. The House cancelled its previously scheduled weekend session days. The Senate never planned to work over the weekend. Both chambers will reconvene this afternoon for the final stretch. The legislative session is set to adjourn on Friday but there are still a lot of moving pieces, particularly surrounding the Fiscal Year 2025 budgetary pressures, spending requests, revenue items, and potential cuts to programs. Members have been advised to be prepared to remain in session through May 31. The Illinois constitution requires a majority of those in each chamber to pass a budget before May 31 (30 Senate votes/60 House votes) and a super majority if passed after (36 votes/71 votes), but the Democrats have more than a super majority in each chamber (40 votes/78 votes).

So far, nearly 200 bills have cleared both chambers. The General Assembly has 30 days from passage to send a bill to the Governor, and Gov. JB Pritzker has 60 days to act. Several large issues remain, including:

- [House Bill 5395](#) (Moeller/Peters) -- Health insurance reform
- [HB 4629](#) (Morgan/Aquino) -- Junk fees
- [Senate Bill 3649](#) (Peters/Evans, Jr.) -- “Captive audience” regulation
- [SB 776](#) (Lightford) -- Hemp regulation
- [SB 3592](#) (Stadelman/Vella) -- Support local journalism

Additionally, there is an expectation that several large pieces of legislation will be filed onto “shell” bills early this week.

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

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

DEM LEADERS SET DATE TO FILL 53RD DISTRICT VACANCY

Northwest suburban Democratic Party leaders will meet on June 5 to select a person to fill the Illinois House seat left open when state Rep. **Mark Walker** was appointed to the state Senate.

BIOMETRIC PRIVACY ACT UPDATE PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS

Under state law, companies must receive written consent from customers and employees to use biometric information like fingerprints, face scanners and retina scanners. That part of the law would not change, although [SB 2979](#) (Cunningham/A. Williams) would allow companies to obtain an electronic signature for consent. What would change is what happens when a company violates the law. Currently, companies can be held liable in civil court for \$1,000 in damages for each violation. That means that every time an employee uses

their fingerprint to punch the clock or enter a restricted area, the company could be held liable if they did not get consent. If SB 2979 becomes law, damages would change to \$1,000 per person. Though the bill passed with bipartisan support, many Republicans voted against the legislation, citing its lack of retroactive protection for businesses past actions. Sen. Cunningham said that he believes the courts can interpret the legislature's intent in passing this bill and apply retroactivity on their own if they choose.

REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES CHALLENGE NEW SLATING BAN

Four Republican would-be state legislative candidates are suing Illinois officials over a new law forbidding political parties from slating candidates after primary elections. The legislation, fast-tracked earlier this month by the General Assembly and quickly signed into law by Gov. Pritzker, bars political parties from appointing a candidate to a legislative general election race if no one from that party ran for the seat in the primary election. The lawsuit alleges that the law violates the candidates' right to vote "by restricting Plaintiffs' efforts to gain access to the ballot by changing the rules in the middle of that process." The plaintiffs also are seeking an emergency temporary restraining order to prevent enforcement of the law so they can appear on the November 5 ballot.

Last Friday, May 17, a Sangamon County judge declined to issue a temporary restraining order and scheduled the hearing on the request to halt enforcement for next Wednesday, May 22. The Illinois Attorney General's Office indicated that the Illinois State Board of Election was not taking a position. Lawyers representing House Speaker Chris Welch appeared to indicate an interest in intervening in the lawsuit, and a hearing was set for tomorrow, May 21.

"PAID LEAVE FOR ALL" IMPLEMENTATION RULES ADOPTED

The Illinois Department of Labor's [final regulations for the Paid Leave for All Workers Act](#) have been adopted after the Department — following further discussions with stakeholder groups — agreed to additional revisions to its proposed rules. While many of the regulations, which took effect immediately, are consistent with the previous proposal, some final rules have changed. The revisions provide greater clarity and flexibility on when an employer may deny paid leave under the act and simplify employer workplace posting requirements. The paid-leave mandate went into effect on January 1, 2024.

MEDICAID REDETERMINATION EFFORTS DEEMED 'NATION-LEADING'

Illinois has maintained Medicaid coverage for 73% of eligible residents during the federal transition away from pandemic-era policies. Redeterminations became necessary when the federal government ended the Continuous Medicaid Coverage Requirement on March 31, 2023. Initially implemented during the COVID-19 outbreak, this requirement paused annual eligibility checks to maintain continuous health coverage. With the requirement's end, Illinois had to resume Medicaid eligibility confirmation for the first time since March 2020; a total of 3.8 million individuals went through redeterminations. Approximately 2.6 million Illinoisans remained on the rolls while 660,000 recipients were disenrolled.

EV BATTERY MATERIAL SUPPLIER ANNOUNCES R&D HEADQUARTERS IN ILLINOIS

Bedrock Materials, a battery technology startup, has announced that it will locate its research and development headquarters in Chicago. The company plans to expand its R&D and manufacturing footprint in Illinois after it recently closed \$9 million in seed funding. Bedrock Materials originated out of Stanford

University to reduce the cost of electric vehicles through the commercialization of sodium-ion battery materials. The company designs and manufactures engineered electrode materials that allow battery makers to produce SIB at scale. With its commitment to investing \$2.5 million and adding at least 25 jobs, Bedrock will receive Reimagining Energy and Vehicles incentives from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

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

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