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## ICCTA Government Relations and Public Policy Report May 23, 2023

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State lawmakers were unable to adjourn the spring 2023 session by the self-imposed deadline of May 19. Neither the House nor the Senate advanced an appropriations vehicle bill to the other chamber, so there was no legal way the two chambers could vote on a budget by last Friday. Both chambers returned home Friday evening so that Democrat leaders can continue to negotiate the final budget package. How the legislative and executive branches wish to manage a healthcare program for undocumented residents continues to be the holdup.

The House and Senate announced that both chambers will return to Springfield later this week: the Senate on Wednesday and Thursday, and the House from Wednesday through Friday. Several substantive bills are still pending on concurrence or 3rd Reading. Late Friday, several large pieces of legislation emerged, including an election omnibus bill, a property tax omnibus bill, a bill extending several sunsets, a cannabis omnibus, a bill offering protections for reproductive health care patients and licensees, a revenue bill, a procurement omnibus bill, Biometric Information Privacy Act reform legislation, a TIF extension bill, and legislation for a state-based insurance exchange, and several others.

Spring session adjournment is typically (pre-COVID) scheduled for May 31, after which a supermajority vote is required to pass legislation containing an immediate effective date. The new fiscal year begins July 1.

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

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

### HOUSE ADOPTS ICCTA-INITIATED NEURODIVERSITY RESOLUTION

The Illinois House has adopted [House Resolution 219](#), which “encourages Illinois' institutions of higher education to embrace the neurodiversity paradigm and adopt a statement of inclusivity of neurodivergent individuals that appreciates and embraces the fact that every student is different and should be encouraged to reach their full potential.” HR 219 was inspired by ICCTA's Neurodiversity Inclusion in Higher Education statement and the work of ICCTA president Dr. Maureen Dunne, a globally recognized neurodiversity expert who has worked closely with many public and private organizations to promote authentic inclusion.

### COMMUNITY COLLEGE CREDIT PARITY BILL MOVES TO GOVERNOR'S DESK

Under [Senate Bill 2288](#), community college students in Illinois would be assured that class credits related to their chosen major in certain fields of study will be transferable to all public colleges and universities in the state. The bill passed the House unanimously after receiving the same chamber-wide support in the Senate in March. Under current law, four-year colleges and universities in Illinois can decide whether to accept community college course credits as direct equivalents to required classes in a transfer student's declared

major. If the university deems the community college class as not equivalent to the one it offers, the credits earned would only count toward a student's elective hour requirements, and he or she would have to retake a similar class at the university. Upon Gov. JB Pritzker's signature, the new law will go into effect January 1, 2024.

### **BLUE COLLAR JOBS ACT TAX CREDIT LAUNCHED**

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity has announced the opening of applications for Blue Collar Jobs Act tax credits. The credits provide \$20 million per year for eligible companies attributable to wages paid to construction workers who work on projects in enterprise zones, a River Edge Redevelopment Zone, for companies designated as a high impact business, or for companies designated with an agreement under the Economic Development for a Growing Economy (EDGE) Program. Republican lawmakers in the Illinois General Assembly have frequently asked for the implementation of the BCJA, which was enacted in 2019 as part of Rebuild Illinois.

### **ETHICS LEGISLATION INTRODUCED**

[House Bill 351](#) would bar anyone convicted of a felony, bribery, perjury or misuse of public funds while serving as a public official from ever being elected to a state or local office again. Current law bars anyone convicted of a felony from holding a state office until they have completed their sentence. A provision of the Illinois Municipal Code bars anyone who has ever been convicted of a felony from holding an elected municipal office; but those people are free to run for the General Assembly, governor or any other constitutional office once they have served their sentence. The bill passed the House with a vote of 106-0 and awaits Senate action.

### **SALARY TRANSPARENCY BILL MOVES FORWARD**

The Senate has approved a measure that would require employers with 15 or more employees in the state to list a pay scale and expected benefits for any position listed on a job posting. It would also create a regulatory structure for the Illinois Department of Labor to investigate violations of the proposed law. [House Bill 3129](#) passed the Senate with a 35-19 vote, and the House concurred 75-39. The bill will soon head to the Governor's desk.

### **PUNITIVE DAMAGES FOR WRONGFUL DEATH CASES**

[HB 219](#) would make it easier for Illinois courts to award punitive damages in wrongful death suits. While compensatory damages are meant to make up for the financial burden a family suffers due to the wrongful death of a loved one, punitive damages are intended to deter bad actors. The bill passed both Houses with Democrat support, and Gov. Pritzker is expected to sign it.

### **NO MORE VENUE SHOPPING FOR CONSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES**

Senate President Don Harmon introduced an amendment to [HB 3062](#) last week, which sets courtrooms in Sangamon and Cook counties as the only locations where actions alleging constitutional violation brought on by legislation or executive orders can be heard. Harmon, along with Gov. Pritzker, Attorney General Kwame Raoul, and House Speaker Emanuel "Chris" Welch, have been at the center of recent constitutional challenge lawsuits. The bill passed the Senate by a 37-16 vote and now returns to the House for a concurrence vote.

## **BILL ALLOWING LAWSUITS AGAINST GUN MANUFACTURERS MOVES FORWARD**

The Senate voted 34-22 and the House voted 71-40-1 to approve a measure that will change a section of the state's Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practice to allow the state and consumers to sue gun manufacturers. It will now head to Gov. Pritzker's desk, and he has vowed to sign it.

## **SOUTH SUBURBAN AIRPORT BILL PASSES BOTH HOUSES**

[HB 2531](#) would require the state to establish a process to find partners in the construction of a new airport in Chicago's south suburbs. The measure also adds domestic and global freight cargo transfer development to the stated goals. If signed into law, the state would advertise for proposals from potential development partners. Gov. Pritzker has indicated that he would not support the airport until an airline or development partner commits to the project. HB 2531 passed both chambers and will go to the Governor for consideration.

## **BEARS LEGISLATION PUNTED TO FALL SESSION**

The sponsor of the latest proposal to subsidize the Chicago Bears' move to a new stadium in Arlington Heights said that he will punt the issue until at least the General Assembly fall veto session, giving him more time to refine a measure that has begun to attract some backing but probably not enough to pass. The current proposal would freeze property taxes on the former horse racing track the Bears are eyeing for a stadium, share sales tax and other proceeds with surrounding towns, and impose a \$3 surcharge on Bears' tickets to help recompense Chicago for the loss of revenue from the team no longer playing at Soldier Field.

## **CANNABIS TRANSPORTERS FILE SUIT**

Thirteen transport companies have filed suit in Sangamon County against the Illinois Department of Agriculture and its director, Jerry Costello II, claiming the state is allowing unlicensed operators to transport marijuana. Those targeted in the suit say the dispute is more a matter of transporters having great difficulty getting any business in Illinois because growers can provide their own delivery service.

## **REP. AMMONS WILL RUN FOR RE-ELECTION**

In January, State Rep. Carol Ammons announced that she would challenge appointed State Sen. Paul Faraci for the Democratic nomination for the Illinois Senate's 52nd District seat. However, Ammons has filed paperwork with the Illinois State Board of Elections amending her previous filing declaring her Senate run. The new filing by the Friends of Carol Ammons stated her intent to seek "re-election to the 103rd Illinois House seat that comprises Champaign-Urbana."

## **BRANDON JOHNSON SWORN IN AS CHICAGO'S 57TH MAYOR**

Brandon Johnson said that he would "tell a different story" about "the soul of Chicago" and chart a new path for the future after being sworn in as the 57th mayor of the city last week. In his inaugural speech, Johnson painted a picture of the city that reinvested in disadvantaged communities and united all its neighborhoods and communities to improve the city as a whole. He also addressed the Chicago City Council, which now includes 16 new members, during the ceremonial session.

Among the investments Johnson enumerated in his speech was his promise to reopen shuttered mental health care centers to support individuals dealing with crises that can lead them to situations that involve harm to themselves or others. The mayor directly addressed his plan for public safety, saying he plans to increase investments in communities that would help address the root causes that drive people to commit crime and bolster enforcement. Johnson added that a safe Chicago also includes a safe, reliable public transportation system, which he said should be "a pathway to opportunity to opportunity and enrichment" where parents feel their children are safe to ride. He said a safe transportation network also means one that is safe for cyclists following the high-profile deaths of several cyclists in collisions with vehicles at dangerous intersections.

## **MAYOR JOHNSON SIGNS FOUR NEW EXECUTIVE ORDERS**

### **❖ EO 2023-15 — Boost Youth Employment**

Mayor Johnson's youth employment executive order instructs the Office of Budget and Management to prepare an analysis of all resources in the city's FY2023 budget that are available to fund youth employment and enrichment programs, including any state, county, or federal funds. In addition, the executive order instructs the Deputy Mayor of Education and Health and Human Services to lead all city departments and agencies in identifying additional entry-level jobs that would be suitable for young people. The order instructs the Mayor's Office staff to coordinate year-round youth employment and enrichment activities among sister agencies and city departments, including collaboration with companies and non-profit organizations, for summer internships and community service credit opportunities with Chicago Public Schools and college credit opportunities with the City Colleges of Chicago.

### **❖ EO 2023-16 — Establish a Deputy Mayor for Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights**

Mayor Johnson's executive order to establish a Deputy Mayor for Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights makes the new role responsible for the coordination and communication between all applicable city departments and officials related to the city's efforts to support newly arrived and established immigrants, refugees, and migrants. In addition, the order instructs all city department heads to take direction from the Deputy Mayor for Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights to assist with efforts to address immediate needs and long-standing policy and programmatic goals to ensure the efficacy of Chicago's status as a welcoming and sanctuary city.

### **❖ EO 2023-17 — Establish a Deputy Mayor for Community Safety**

Mayor Johnson's executive order to establish a Deputy Mayor for Community Safety calls on the new office to focus on eradicating the root causes of crime and violence and advance a comprehensive, healing-centered approach to community safety. In addition, the order instructs all city departments to work with the Deputy Mayor for Community Safety to achieve this goal.

### **❖ EO 2023-18 — Establish a Deputy Mayor for Labor Relations**

Mayor Johnson's executive order to establish a Deputy Mayor for Labor Relations will allow coordination to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners, job seekers, and retirees of Chicago, in addition to improving working conditions, advancing new job opportunities for employment, and protecting workers' rights.

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

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