



ICCTA Government Relations and Public Policy Report May 7, 2024

We are in the final month of the Illinois General Assembly's spring 2024 session. Despite passing the committee deadline for legislation in the opposite chamber, several bills received deadline extensions. The House will be in today at 3 PM, and the Senate returns tomorrow.

The Fiscal Year 2025 state budget is the primary focus from here on out. In a report released last week, FY25 revenue remains as predicted as state legislators figure out how to make the most of strong revenue with a tighter revenue-to-expenditures margin. April produced "solid" revenue growth, according to the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability. That means that revenues are on pace to come in \$2 billion ahead of what lawmakers expected when they passed the FY24 budget last year. There will not be a windfall, however, because the excess funds were anticipated when Gov. JB Pritzker proposed his budget in February.

*****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 103RD ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- May 17: Deadline – Third Reading for House bills in Senate & Senate bills in House
- May 24: Adjournment
- May 25-31: *Contingent Session Days for the Budget*

PRITZKER SIGNS ELECTION CHANGES

Last week, Gov. Pritzker signed legislation two days after it was introduced that makes some changes to election rules. The bill adds three non-binding referendums to the November 2024 general election ballot. The ballot questions focus on:

1. Protecting elections workers;
2. Targeting an additional tax on income over \$1 million for the purpose of property tax relief; and
3. Supporting insurance coverage for in vitro fertilization treatment.

As state law limits the number of questions on a statewide ballot to three, the legislation effectively crowds out the possibility of any other referenda appearing on the November ballot. The legislation would also eliminate the longstanding option for political parties to appoint challengers to fill out the ballot if the party did not field a candidate in the primary election. In addition, it shifts the period for gathering candidate petition signatures and filing the petition to appear on the primary ballot back by 28 days.

After the bill was signed into law, the Illinois State Board of Elections said that it has already accepted some slating filings -- and despite the new law, will continue to accept them under the original deadline of June 3.

CENSUS REPORTS RECORD RISE IN SCHOOL SPENDING

U.S. school funding rose by the greatest proportion in more than two decades from FY21 to FY22, according to recent Census Bureau survey results. Illinois ranked 12th among states and Washington, D.C. in per student FY22 spending at \$18,927. The No. 1 state was New York at \$28,889, while the lowest was Utah at \$9,552. Among Illinois' neighbors, Michigan was 21st at \$15,719; Wisconsin 26th at \$14,505; Kentucky 32nd at \$13,549; Iowa 36th at \$13,259; Missouri 37th at 12,631; and Indiana 38th at \$12,322.

RIVIAN TO EXPAND PLANT IN NORMAL

Backed by \$827 million in state incentives over 30 years, Rivian plans to invest \$1.5 billion to expand its 4 million-square-foot auto plant in Normal. The expansion, which is estimated to create more than 550 assembly jobs over five years, is geared toward building the midsize R2 SUV, which is expected to begin rolling off the production line in 2026. Rivian opted to launch production by expanding its Normal plant instead of building a new plant in Georgia. The majority of the incentives will come from state tax credits paid out over 30 years, if Rivian meets its investment and hiring obligations of retaining at least 6,000 jobs during the entire three-decade period.

ICC COMMISSIONERS CONFIRMED

The Illinois Senate has confirmed the appointments of Stacey Paradis and Conrad Reddick to the Illinois Commerce Commission. Commissioner Reddick was appointed to a five-year term on March 13, 2023; Commissioner Paradis was appointed to a five-year term on April 3, 2023. Reddick brings 40 years of experience as a corporate and regulatory attorney to the ICC. He specializes in utility regulation and litigation and previously worked with the city of Chicago as a Special Duty Corporation Counsel. Paradis most recently served as executive director of the Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance and as president of the Illinois Environmental Council Education Fund.

ILLINOIS AWARDS 35 NEW CANNABIS DISPENSARY LICENSES

A total of 35 additional Conditional Adult Use Dispensing Organization Licenses have been issued to applicants in the state's Social Equity Criteria Lottery. The licensees are the third round of applicants and will join 200 other licensees chosen in two previous lotteries. The new licenses are conditional until applicants open stores and receive final certification from the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. Illinois originally had authorized 55 licenses in the latest round. Thirteen applications are still under review, and seven others chosen in the lottery did not meet the state's social-equity criteria. Seven new potential licensees will be chosen from the lottery pool.

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

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