



ICCTA Government Relations and Public Policy End of Session Report June 6, 2023

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The make-up of the 103rd Illinois General Assembly is the most diverse group of lawmakers in state history. Some notable firsts include an active and much larger Asian-American caucus, the first Muslim members, and a record number of 78 Democratic House members. The 78 House Democrats are led by Illinois' first Black House Speaker, Emanuel "Chris" Welch, and the 40 House Republicans are led by Illinois' first female House Minority Leader, Tony McCombie. With their super-majority-plus numbers, Democrats did not need Republican votes to pass legislation, but McCombie made a public plea to Welch to work with her anyway.

The Senate Democrats, led again by Senate President Don Harmon, enjoyed a 40-19 Democratic majority. As in the House, there was turnover in the Senate's Republican leadership: Sen. John Curran was selected to lead the Republican caucus. At the beginning of the session, Curran signaled a similar tone as McCombie's, saying that democracy is best served when policies are crafted by two parties, rather than unilaterally. To foster bipartisan cooperation, the Senate formed two committees with bipartisan co-chairs – the State Government and Higher Education committees. These early showings of bipartisanship set the tone for the entire session, encouraging greater collaboration and dialogue among senators in the upper chamber.

The 2023 Illinois legislative session met fully in person this year for the first time in three years. A staggering 6,689 bills were filed this session. Of those, 566 bills passed both chambers and will be sent to the Governor for consideration. With more than half of the General Assembly (those new to the chamber since 2020) not having the experience of a "normal" session and budget-making process, and a remarkable number of freshmen lawmakers (11 new senators and 28 new representatives), the session was slow to get started.

Lawmakers were unable to adjourn by their self-imposed deadline of May 19, failing to reach an agreement on the state budget. How the legislative and executive branches wanted to manage a healthcare program for undocumented residents was the main sticking point that held up the final agreement. As leaders continued to negotiate the budget in the final days of session, several large pieces of legislation surfaced in last-minute fashion. These bills included an election omnibus bill, a property tax omnibus bill, a bill extending several sunsets, a cannabis regulatory bill, 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, legislation for a state-based insurance exchange, rate review for health insurance products - and several others.

Despite a desire to include Republican votes on the budget package, Republicans were troubled that the Invest in Illinois Kids Tax Credit was not extended beyond its December 31st, 2023 expiration. (Sen. Elgie Sims stated to reporters after the budget vote that there is time to take up this issue during the fall veto session.) Further, despite attempts to do so, the Illinois General Assembly did not make substantive changes to the State's BIPA nor cannabis laws.

The legislature has 30 days to present a bill to the Governor, and the Governor has 60 days after receiving the bill to sign, veto, or issue an amendatory veto. The General Assembly will not return to Springfield until the fall veto session.

Fall Veto Session has now been scheduled for October 24-26, and November 7-9. These dates will be subject to change or elimination based upon vetoes made by the Governor and any emerging issues that may need to be addressed before the end of the calendar year.

FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGET OVERVIEW

FY 24 Budget Bill

Senate Bill 250 (Sims-D/Gordon-Booth-D) contains the state's Fiscal Year 2024 operating budget and capital budgets. The final spending plan looks substantially like the one that Gov. JB Pritzker outlined in his February budget proposal. It contains several new initiatives, including investments in pre-K through 12th grade education, child welfare, combating poverty and homelessness, and increased spending on higher education.

The new budget appropriates more than \$100 billion in All Funds, including \$50.618 billion in General Revenue Funds predicated upon \$50.717 billion in anticipated revenue. The capital budget includes \$4.1 billion in new capital appropriations, including \$2.9 billion to the Illinois Department of Transportation; \$959 million to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (water loan programs); \$222 million to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development Grants); and \$50 million to the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Main Street, Broadband, and minority-owned small business grants).

In addition to making the full pension payment, the budget will allocate an additional \$200 million towards pension debt, bringing the total pension stabilization investment to \$700 million. Another \$450 million is allocated to pay off the rail-splitter bond debt (tobacco settlement bonds), which is projected to save the state \$60 million in interest and virtually eliminate all short and medium-term debt. And with a \$200,000 million deposit, Illinois' Rainy-Day Fund will surpass \$2 billion for the first time.

Economic Development: The FY24 budget allocates \$400 million to "close" major economic development deals and incentivize businesses to create jobs in Illinois. A one-stop business portal to foster entrepreneurship will receive \$10 million, and \$40 million is appropriated for forgivable loans to launch more social equity cannabis businesses. \$20 million is appropriated for a Fast-Track Workforce Program, and \$10 million will fund minority-owned business retention grants. DCEO also received a \$10 million appropriation for the Clean Energy EV Career and Technical Education Pilot Program and \$2 million to create the Office of Rural Development.

LGDF: While still not fully funded, the FY24 budget assumes transfers into the Local Government Distributive Fund to increase by \$112 million, which represents a 6.47% funding rate for LGDF.

Poverty Initiatives: The FY24 budget includes \$200 million for the new Home Illinois Program -- a homelessness prevention program launched by the Governor. The program will focus on housing, outreach, and other programs, including a new \$20 million Grocery Initiative to expand grocery access to underserved urban neighborhoods and rural towns. Some of the initial funding will be supported by current welcome center programming funds and will support asylum seeking services.

Health Care and Human Services: With the end of the federal Public Health Emergency on April 1, 2023, came an end to enhanced federal match for Illinois' Medicaid program. As a result, the Illinois Department of Health and Family Services budget appropriates \$715.5 million to replace the loss of enhanced match. HFS' total All Funds FY24 appropriation is \$38.2 billion, an All Funds increase of \$770 million over FY23 appropriations.

After 7 weeks of discussions related to current and projected spending for the Health Benefits for Immigrant Adults Program, the final budget appropriates roughly \$550 million for the program to cover the existing population (adults ages 42 and over). The Pritzker administration was also given emergency rulemaking authority to institute cost controls and other measures needed to manage the program, including reducing and managing the program's costs by limiting future enrollment, utilizing managed care models, and maximizing federal funds. Despite intense pressure, the program was not expanded to cover individuals ages 19 to 41.

Illinois' more than 200 hospitals were awarded a 10% across-the-board Medicaid rate increase effective January 1, 2024. The Governor's office claims that federal approval must first be obtained before the rates can take effect or the state will not be reimbursed. In addition to the uniform rate increase, hospitals were also successful in securing additional funding for safety net hospitals (through an increase in the safety net add-on payment, inpatient psych rates, and grant funding), and in harmonizing inpatient psychiatric rates at all hospitals with a new \$624/day floor. A \$3.5 million pool will be created for critical access hospitals, and long-term acute care facilities and psychiatric hospitals will finally receive their Lame Duck payments.

Other healthcare highlights include: state funds for all human services agency budgets increased by nearly \$3 billion over FY23 levels, while federal funds dropped by \$1.6 billion. The Children's Behavioral Health Transformation Initiative ([SB 724](#)) will receive \$22.8 million in start-up costs, and \$92.5 million is included to raise the asset limit for the Aged Blind and Disabled population from \$2,000 to \$17,500. The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services will receive a \$75 million increase, which will allow the agency to hire 192 new staff, expand training and protection, increase scholarships for Youth in Care, and improve facilities. Another \$24 million is allocated for rate increases for home workers who assist the elderly and increased outreach to the elderly and for Adult Day Services. Direct Service Providers, who serve individuals with developmental disabilities, will receive a \$2.50/hour increase beginning January 1, 2024.

Education: The FY24 budget allocates \$250 million for Smart Start Illinois, which is the Governor's early childhood plan that aims to eliminate preschool deserts, stabilize the childcare workforce, expand the Early Intervention Program and Home Visiting programs, as well as beginning the overhaul of the childcare payment management system. An additional \$50 million is allocated for early childhood capital improvements.

With respect to K-12 education, an additional \$350 million is allocated for the evidence-based funding formula; \$45 million for the first year of a three-year pilot to fill teacher vacancies; \$3 million to expand access to computer science coursework; and \$1.6 million to launch Dolly Parton's Imagination Library statewide.

For higher education, an additional \$100 million is allocated for MAP grant funding to ensure everyone at or below the median income level can attend community college for free. Public universities are receiving an additional \$80.5 million, while community colleges will receive an additional \$19.4 million over previous year's levels. Pritzker has said these increases effectively make a community college education available tuition- and fee-free for every working-class student in Illinois.

AFSCME Contract Negotiations: It is less clear how the budget will account for potential outcomes of the state's contract negotiations with its largest employee union. The Senate's chief budget negotiator noted that the Governor's administration has, "instructed agencies to plan accordingly," and the General Assembly will "act accordingly" when the new contract is finalized – highlighting the potential for a supplemental budget.

Budget Implementation Bill

[House Bill 3817](#) (Gordon-Booth-D/Sims-D) contains the statutory language necessary to implement the FY24 budget. The legislation authorizes funds sweeps; allows for a transfer limit of 8% for state agencies for FY24; increases election judges' daily compensation reimbursement from the state by \$20; includes coverage in the state employee health insurance program for infertility services and injectable weight loss medication; resets TANF poverty guidelines at 40%; creates the Opioid Remediation Services Capital Investment Grant Program to

make capital improvements to local governments and substance use prevention and treatment providers for opioid abatement; allows the Illinois Department of Insurance to charge an annual compliance fee for police and fire pension funds to allow for audits of those funds; authorizes grants to attract conventions and sporting events; and increases the Illinois Secretary of State's vehicle title fee by \$10 to \$165 and authorizes fund transfers with the SOS to assist with the office's technology modernization, among many, many other things.

Bond Authorization

[HB 3551](#) (Hoffman-D/Harmon-D) creates the Bond Authorization Act of 2023. The legislation specifically authorizes \$700 million in new bond authorizations for capital improvements and infrastructure investments, such as technology transformation, and makes clean up changes to the state's bond acts.

2023 SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Senate Bill 1298 (Gillespie-D/Gabel-D) – **Omnibus Medicaid and Healthcare Package**

- This legislation grants HFS emergency rulemaking for the Healthcare Benefits for Immigrant Adults Program, which provides HFS the ability to manage costs. The bill further authorizes rate increases for various provider types including for: supportive living dementia care rates, inpatient and across-the-board rates for hospitals; substance use disorder treatment; nursing services for medically fragile and technology dependent children; the nursing home support rate; ventilator care in nursing homes; occupational, physical, and speech therapies; ground and air ambulance; adult day services; medically complex and developmentally disabled individuals; long-acting reversible contraceptives, and to support a \$17 an hour wage for homecare workers in the Community Care Program. The rate increases take effect January 1, 2024, with a cost estimate of \$317 million for 6 months of the fiscal year.
- In addition to rate increase, the legislation also creates a new billing code for dementia assessment and care planning. The Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation is granted rulemaking authority to implement the limited licensure for international medical graduates. The legislation also includes telehealth services for developmentally disabled individuals and authorizes subclinical professionals at Federally Qualified Health Clinics to be reimbursed for services. Guardrails were added for supportive living program expansion. SB 1298 passed by a vote of 72-31-0 in the House and 44-0-2 in the Senate.

Senate Bill 1561 (Villanueva-D/Cassidy-D) – **Reproductive Health/Patient Provider Protection**

- This is a trailer bill to the Patient Provider and Protection Act and delays the effective date of the Abortion Care Clinical Training Program Act to 2025 to allow the Illinois Department of Public Health more time for implementation. This bill will also mandate insurance coverage of preventative health services and immunizations. Passed both houses.

Senate Bill 1675 (Villanueva-D/Buckner-D) – **Property Tax Sale Reform**

- Among other things, allows local counties and municipalities to intervene after failed delinquent tax sales to save abandoned properties and reduces the monthly interest rate on delinquent taxes for homeowners from 1.5% to .75%; reduces taxpayer-funded payouts to property tax buyers by decreasing the sale in error loopholes and also eliminates tax buyer leverage in Cook County. Passed both houses.

Senate Bill 1963 (Villanueva-D/Tarver-D) – **Omnibus Revenue Package**

- Some of the provisions include:
 - *Ethanol*: new sales tax treatment for mid-range ethanol blends, gasohol, and majority blended ethanol fuel;

- *Aircraft parts*: expands the exemption for materials, parts, equipment, components, and furnishings incorporated into or upon an aircraft;
- *Farm machinery*: provides the exemption for farm machinery and equipment also includes certain electrical power generation equipment;
- *Public utilities*: makes changes concerning municipal tax review of public utilities;
- *Parking tax*: makes changes concerning booking intermediaries;
- *Cigarette tax*: makes changes concerning the distribution on the cigarette tax moneys;
- *Voluntary EMS tax credit*: creates a credit for individuals who serve as volunteer emergency workers.

Passed both houses.

[Senate Bill 2123](#) (Morrison-D/Stuart-D) – **Election Omnibus**

- Among the bill's many changes includes the creation of a ranked-choice voting task force, circulation on newspaper websites, naturalization ceremony registration, allows Chicago senators to file in Cook County, 16-year-olds to pre-register to vote, permanent vote by mail notice changes, enables a candidate email on filing statement, makes November 4, 2024 a holiday for K-12 but not colleges and universities, and delays the Chicago elected school board map by 9 months. Passed both houses.

[House Bill 579](#) (Gabel-D/Gillespie-D) – **State-Based Health Exchange**

- Adopts a state-based insurance marketplace which allows Illinois to set up its own insurance marketplace, similar to Obamacare, to allow the state to have more control over the health insurance market and to protect itself from changes in federal policy. The full transition is expected to take three years (until January 1, 2026) and will be run by the Illinois Department of Insurance.
- The bill caps the assessment on insurers to fund the program at 3.5%. The new Marketplace Director of the Illinois Health Benefits Exchange and the 10 public members must be appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. Authorization was also given to the Department of Insurance to issue rules to require that plans offered on the exchange conform with standardized plan designs. Makes a change concerning the purpose of the assessment. HB 579 passed along party lines, as Republicans had concerns as to why the state should take on the program and whether it can be up-and-running properly under the short time frame of the legislation. Passed both houses.

[House Bill 2296](#) (Gabel-D/Fine-D) – **Health Insurance Rate Review**

- This bill creates a process, beginning in plan year 2026, for the Department of Insurance to approve, modify, or reject rate increases for all individual and small group accident and health insurance policies. The bill also requires that forms and rates filed for large employer group accident and health insurance be automatically deemed approved 90 days after filing. The bill also requires the DOI to annually issue a transparency report beginning in 2026. Passed both houses.

[House Bill 2089](#) (T. Jones-D/Harris-D) – **Insurance Supplier Diversity**

- Requires every insurance company with assets of \$50 million or more to submit a report on its voluntary supplier diversity program, or the company's procurement program if there is no supplier diversity program, to the Department of Insurance. DOI will then publish the results of the report on their website for 5 years. The department will prepare a one-page template for the voluntary supplier diversity report and hold an annual workshop with representatives of the companies and vendors. Passed both houses.

[House Bill 2352](#) (Evans-D/Martwick-D) – **Cook County Tier II Pensions**

- Requires annual earnings, salary, or wages of a Tier 2 recipient in Cook County to track with the Social Security wage base rather than the \$106,800 cap; requires the counties contribution to be paid

through a tax levy and other available funds; and allows veterans to purchase two years of service credit. Passed both houses.

[House Bill 2507](#) (Kifowit-D/Villanueva-D) – **Property Tax Omnibus**

- Property that is used for a petroleum refinery may be the subject of a real property tax assessment settlement agreement among the taxpayer and taxing districts in which the property is situated; veterans no longer have to reapply for the Veterans with Disabilities Homestead exemption; extensions for property tax levies made under the Park District and Municipal Aquarium and Museum Act are special purpose extensions and are not included in the park district's or municipality's aggregate extension; creates an exemption for municipality-built homes; and property that is used to provide services that require a license under the Nursing Home Care Act or the Specialized Mental Health Facilities Act should not be assessed at a higher level than residential property in which they are located. Passed both houses.

[House Bill 2518](#) (Croke-D/D. Turner-D) – **TIF Omnibus**

- Extends various TIF districts in the state of Illinois. The legislation grants extensions to Chicago, Channahon, Peoria, Rock Island, Champaign, Evergreen Park, and Sparta, and also authorizes the Bank of Springfield to petition to create a tourism preservation and sustainability district to fund improvements to the facility. Passed both houses.

[House Bill 2878](#) (Hoffman-D/Castro-D) – **Procurement Omnibus**

- Among other things, allows chief procurement officers to approve the award of a contract on a non-competitive basis to a not-for-profit agency for persons with significant disabilities, creates a bid preference for firms that employ former coal mine employees, amends the Public Private Partnership for Transportation Act to allow the tollway and units of local government to work with PPPs as opposed to just with the Illinois Department of Transportation, makes changes concerning public construction bonding requirements and adds provisions concerning contract diversity reporting. Passed both houses.

[House Bill 3062](#) (Hoffman-D/Harmon-D) – **Venue for Constitutional Challenges**

- Sets courtrooms in Sangamon and Cook Counties as the only locations where lawsuits against the state or any of its officers, employees or agencies alleging constitutional violations brought on by legislation or executive orders can be heard. Passed both houses.

[House Bill 3445](#) (Walsh-D/Stadelman-D) – **Energy Package**

- Expands the eligibility of the “solar on schools” category of the Adjustable Block Program (established by the Future Energy Jobs Act) to include public institutions of higher education; requires the Illinois Power Agency to conduct an energy policy study to look at the potential impacts of utility offshore wind projects, energy storage solutions (like carbon capture), and underground transmission; and requires the Illinois Commerce Commission to host a series of stakeholder workshops to look at the planning and delivery of thermal energy networks. At the request of the Illinois Farm Bureau, the bill includes trailer language regarding commercial wind and solar citing. It also establishes a temporary right of first refusal in the MISO territory (Ameren) for the construction of high-voltage power lines in its service area. The Governor has indicated that he opposes the right of first refusal language and will veto this bill. Passed both houses.

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[House Bill 3903](#) (Rita-D/Murphy-D) – **Red Light Camera Ethics**

- Prohibits any contractor, or PAC affiliated with the contractor, that provides equipment and services for automated law enforcement and automated speed enforcement systems (i.e red light cameras) to municipalities or counties from making campaign contributions. Passed both houses.

OTHER NOTABLE BILLS PASSED BOTH HOUSES

[House Joint Resolution 23](#) (Stava-Murray-D/Ventura-D) supports IDOT's "**I-55 Managed Lane Project**" which will implement two Express Toll Lanes in each direction between I-294 and I-90/94 and one Express Toll Lane in each direction from I-355 and I-294

[House Bill 219](#) (Hoffman-D/Harmon-D) allows **punitive damages** to be recovered by personal injury cases under the Wrongful Death Act. The legislation excludes state and municipal governments and their employees, as well as legal and medical malpractice.

[Senate Bill 76](#) (Rezin-R/Yednock-D) will end the state's ban on the construction of **new nuclear power plants** which was enacted in 1987. The bill would specifically allow for the construction of small modular nuclear reactors. These reactors operate at a much smaller scale than traditional nuclear reactors and are built in factories and assembled on site. SMRs can be deployed just about anywhere.

[House Bill 2862](#) (Peters-D/Gonzalez-D) creates the **Temp Worker Fairness and Safety Act**, which works to improve safety standards and mandates equal pay for equal work after a 60-day grace period for temp workers. Also creates a whistleblower right of action to allow worker advocates to bring enforcement actions against abusive employers.

[House Bill 2954](#) (Gong-Gershowitz-D/Morrison-D) allows victims of "**doxing**" to pursue civil litigation. "Doxing" occurs when an individual intentionally publishes another person's personal information without their consent with an intent to harm or harass.

[House Bill 3129](#) (Pacione-Zayas-D/Canty-D) requires employers to **list a pay scale** and expected benefits for any position listed on a job posting including on a third-party platform i.e., LinkedIn.

[Senate Bill 2192](#) (Villivalam-D/Davis-D) Requires a state agency to detail in writing **why bids were rejected** if a bidder fails to be awarded a contract after 4 consecutive bids for the same service.

[Senate Bill 1818](#) (Turner-D/Buckner-D) establishes a commission to determine if the state of Illinois should design a **new state flag** and if so, what it should look like and how much it would cost.

[House Bill 3902](#) (Holmes-D/Hernandez-D) allows law enforcement to use **drones** to monitor special events, like parades and festivals, to detect breaches and identify safety issues.

[Senate Bill 1508](#) (Hunter-D/Hernandez-D) creates a joint special instant **scratch-off game** for the benefit of several veterans, social service, and not-for-profit organizations. The bill caps the number of causes funded through the joint scratch off at 10 causes in total at any given time.

[House Bill 559](#) (Morgan-D/Glowiak-Hilton-D) allows **health care workers** who received temporary licensure during the pandemic to apply for permanent, full licensure while continuing to practice in Illinois, allows pharmacies to continue operating COVID-19 and flu testing and vaccination services and treatment for COVID-19. The law was necessitated by the COVID-19 emergency declaration coming to an end on May 11 and was effective immediately upon the Governor's signature. This was the first bill to be passed and signed into law by the 103rd General Assembly.

[Senate Bill 724](#) (Feigenholtz-D/LaPointe-D) creates the **Interagency Children's Behavioral Health Services Act**. A new position, a Children's Behavioral Health Transformation Officer, is created to lead the state's

comprehensive, interagency effort to ensure youth with significant and complex behavioral health needs receive appropriate community and residential services, and the state-supported system is transparent and easier for youth and their families to navigate.

[House Bill 2188](#) (Crespo-D/Joyce-D) transfers the **Medicaid Fraud Unit** from the Illinois State Police to the Illinois Attorney General's Office.

[Senate Bill 1665](#) (Pacione-Zayas-D/Moeller-D) provides any individual receiving **taxpayer-funded subsidies** through a local program meant to address poverty would not have that income counted against them when trying to qualify for medical assistance.

[House Bill 2222](#) (Gong-Gershowitz-D/Gillespie-D) gives the AG notice of **healthcare mergers** in Illinois to protect consumers from higher healthcare costs. The Illinois Hospital Association worked with the Attorney General's Office to bring the Illinois Hospital Association to neutral on the bill.

[House Bill 1540](#) (Morrison-D/Lilly-D) adds **e-cigarettes** to the Indoor Smoking Act, effectively banning the use of e-cigarettes in public indoor spaces.

[House Bill 2431](#) (Kelly-D/Cervantes-D) is an initiative of the Illinois Secretary of State that prohibits **video conferencing or using social media while driving**.

[House Bill 2531](#) (Davis-D/Harris-D) makes the **Peotone Airport** one step closer to reality. The bill requires IDOT to proactively seek out developers with the interest and potential of building out the state's land into a cargo airport within six months of the proposal becoming law.

[House Bill 2443](#) (Chung-D/Koehler-D) requires insurance companies to provide coverage for medically necessary **hearing aids**. Current state law only addresses insurance coverage for hearing aids helping people under 18.

[Senate Bill 1782](#) (Koehler-D/Chung-D) gives financial protection to children whose parents make money posting **videos of their children on social media**. Bill sponsor Sen. Dave Koehler said if the bill is signed into law, Illinois would be the first state in the nation to enact such legislation.

[House Bill 3814](#) (Harper-D/D. Turner-D) requires schools to consider students as in-attendance if the student's absence is to participate in a **FFA or 4-H program** competition or exhibition, supporting student efforts to continue their education outside of the classroom.

[Senate Bill 2288](#) (Castro-D/Costa Howard-D) provides **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.

NOTABLE BILLS HELD

[House Bill 3811](#) (Burke-D/Cunningham-D) – **BIPA** – Senate Amendments 2, 3, and 4 would allow individuals to sue companies over improper collection or storage of information such as fingerprints or facial scans and increase the fine for negligent violations from \$1,000 to \$1,500; they also added “electronic signature as an eligible type of violation; and clarified circumstances in which the same action would only count as a single

violation. None of the amendments provided language to clarify a violation only occurs when actual harm is proven. This is in response to the \$17 billion judgement against White Castle, which was cited for each time an employee's biometric data was used as opposed to one collective violation. The Illinois Trial Lawyers Association, the ACLU, and business leaders met for months in an attempt to negotiate BIPA reforms but were unable to reach consensus. The bill failed to advance out of Senate committee.

[House Bill 610](#) (Moynan-D) – **Chicago Bears** – Supports the Chicago Bears plan to relocate to Arlington Heights by creating the Arlington Megaproject Infrastructure Fund, which will help the surrounding communities with building infrastructure to support the move and imposes a \$3 admission tax on tickets to be used to pay off the debt owed to the City of Chicago.

[Senate Bill 1559](#) – (Ford-D) – **Cannabis Regulation** – Increases canopy space for craft growers from 5,000 square feet to 14,000 square feet, allows dispensaries to operate drive-thru windows and offer curbside pick-up services, making sure they prioritize medical patients, allows medical exams to obtain a medical cannabis card to be conducted via telehealth and eliminates the requirement that cannabis be transported in an odor proof cannabis container.

[House Bill 2520](#) (Harper-D) – **Environmental Justice** – Sets requirements for new constructions in areas designated as an environmental justice community, including holding a public hearing before applying for a permit and submitting an EJ assessment with application. The bill also sets the application fee to \$100,000 per permit and allows public participation for permitting transactions and an EJ community. The sponsor attempted to pass this bill on two separate occasions, each time failing to achieve the minimum number of votes (60) to pass a bill.

[Senate Bill 1996](#) – (Buckner-D) – **Gaming** – Makes changes to the Illinois Gambling Act by allowing the issuance of occupational licenses to individuals convicted of felonies IF the applicant does not perform any function involved in gaming by patrons; allows the denial of occupational licenses to any applicant who has a background that poses a threat to the security and integrity of gaming; makes requirements for the consideration of applicants with criminal convictions.

[House Bill 351](#) (Tarver-D) – **Ethics** – Bars 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.

[House Bill 676](#) (Hirschauer-D) – **Firearm Omnibus Package** – Includes several provisions such as creating a Task Force on Firearm Insurance and allowing judges to order law enforcement to seize guns while issuing emergency orders of protection.

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

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