

ICCTA ACTION ALERT

March 5, 2007

The Illinois General Assembly has completed its work for the week and adjourned the session Friday afternoon. Both houses of the General Assembly are scheduled to return to Springfield on Tuesday, March 6. The Governor is scheduled to deliver his budget to members of the General Assembly on Wednesday, March 7.

The spring legislative session is now well underway. Most legislation that is to be considered during the spring session has been filed. Committee hearings in the Senate and the House are occurring and will continue to occur for the next few weeks.

*The Illinois Community College Trustees Association has filed several bills, including legislation to clarify that community college districts are units of local government and not state agencies under the Ethics Act. **Senate Bill 589** is sponsored by Senator Debbie Halvorson, and **House Bill 3504** is sponsored by Rep. Kurt Granberg. In addition, Senator Kirk Dillard is sponsoring **Senate Bill 1278** to assist in the local government clarification. Other bills affecting community colleges are listed below.*

BILLS AFFECTING COMMUNITY COLLEGES

House Bill 14 Scholarship Requirements (Lang)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Creates the Higher Education Scholarship Act. Allows scholarships to be awarded to entering freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors at community colleges, colleges, and universities, whether public or private, located in Illinois. Establishes Illinois residency requirements, minimum grade point average requirements, and other requirements that the student must meet to be eligible for a scholarship. Provides that the scholarship, subject to the amounts appropriated by the General Assembly, includes tuition and mandatory fees (in an amount not to exceed the maximum amount allowed to be awarded under the Monetary Award Program for a student at a private institution). Authorizes the Illinois Student Assistance Commission to promulgate rules relating to the scholarships.

HB 119 Re-Authorization of Nursing and Advanced Practice Act (Saviano)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the Regulatory Sunset Act to change the repeal date of the Nursing and Advanced Practice Nursing Act from January 1, 2008, to January 1, 2018.

HB 210 Open Meetings Act – Special Meeting Items (Sacia)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Open Meetings Act. Prohibits a public body, during a meeting other than a special meeting for a bona fide emergency, from voting on an item that was not included in the agenda that was posted for that meeting.

HB 253 Higher Education Budget Amount (Beiser-Boland-Jefferson)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the State Budget Law to provide that for each fiscal year (i) the Governor shall submit to the General Assembly a proposed budget for higher education in which for every \$2 appropriated for elementary and secondary education in the state budget at least \$1 is appropriated for higher education, and (ii) the General Assembly shall appropriate amounts for higher education in which for every \$2 appropriated for elementary and secondary education for that fiscal year at least \$1 is appropriated for higher education.

- continued -



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HB 330 ISAC MAP Grant Calculations (Miller)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Higher Education Student Assistance Act. With respect to the Monetary Award Program, provides that ISAC shall base an independent student's financial resources on an adjusted estimated family contribution amount, which amount shall equal one-half of the student's estimated family contribution. ISAC estimates that for FY08, the cost of favoring independent students in this way is estimated to be \$15 million. Without additional funding, which may or may not be included in the Governor's recommended FY08 state budget, this change would result in application processing dates being moved up three weeks (denying about 6,000 students financial aid) or reducing all MAP awards by 4.0 percent, decreasing award amounts by up to \$200 per student.

HB 414 Student Housing at Community Colleges (Schock)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the Public Community College Act to allow a board of trustees to provide or contract for residential housing for students and employees at a community college campus. In the Article concerning building programs, removes dormitories from the definition of "facilities" which currently prevents community colleges from becoming involved with student housing.

HB 479 Veterans Grants Appropriations (Black and many others)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Creates the Continuing Appropriation for Military Scholarships Act. Require a General Revenue Fund recommendation by the Governor in the annual budget and annual General Revenue Fund appropriations by the General Assembly sufficient to reimburse institutions of higher learning in Illinois for not charging students tuition and fees under the Veteran Grant program, the Illinois National Guard Grant and Naval Militia Grant program, and the MIA/POW Scholarship program. Requires an irrevocable and continuing appropriation if the General Assembly fails to make sufficient appropriations.

HB 666 / HB 3476 General Assembly Scholarships for Community Colleges (Chapa LaVia)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the School Code to provide that a General Assembly scholarship may be used at a public community college, not just a state university. Currently General Assembly scholarships may only be used at a public university.

HB 703 Limit on ISAC MAP Grant Amounts (Miller)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Women Employed initiated this bill to provide that the MAP grant amount must not exceed the amount that equals the average tuition and necessary fees for undergraduate students at public universities in Illinois for the academic year no more than 2 years prior to the academic year for which grant assistance is being requested (now the amount is \$4,968) or the amount that equals the average tuition and necessary fees for undergraduate students at public universities for the academic year for which grant assistance is being requested (instead of the amount that equals 2 semesters or 3 quarters tuition and other necessary fees required generally by the institution of higher learning of all full-time undergraduate students).

HB 720 Community College Board Quorum (Black)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill would amend the Public Community College Act and provide that for all meetings of a board of trustees, a quorum of members must be physically present at the location of the meeting. The bill clarifies language differences between the Open Meetings Act and the Public Community College Act.

HB 721 Community College Board Meeting Schedules (Black)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Also an ICCTA initiative, this bill amends the Public Community College Act to provide that public notice of the schedule of regular meetings of a board of trustees for the next calendar year, as set at the organizational meeting of the board of trustees, must be given at the beginning of that calendar year. The bill clarifies language differences between the Open Meetings Act and the Public Community College Act. HB 721 is identical to **SB 401**.

HB 1276 Kaskaskia College Trustee Districts (Granberg)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

This is a shell bill that adds a section concerning trustee districts for Kaskaskia College. Substantive language may be added by the sponsor later this spring.

HB 1348 Clarification of Lincoln Land Community College Subdistricts (Hannig)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Public Community College Act with respect to Lincoln Land Community College's trustee subdistricts. Provides that all counties, townships, census tracts, block groups, blocks, annexations, and natural boundaries are those that appear on maps published by the United States. Permits the State Board of Elections to clarify certain boundaries.

HB 1434 Harper College -- Pilot Baccalaureate Degree Program (Crespo)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Public Community College Act to provide that William Rainey Harper College may create a pilot baccalaureate program under which the district may establish and offer bachelor's degrees in two fields of study if certain conditions are met, including requiring (i) that the degree programs not compete with any nearby public university, (ii) that the district identify and document unmet workforce needs, (iii) that the degree programs not require any additional funding from local taxes or the State, (iv) that the Illinois Community College Board and the Illinois Board of Higher Education approve the offering of the degree programs, and (v) that the pilot program expire 4 years after the initial offering of the degree programs, unless otherwise extended by law.

HB 1464 Textbooks Costs and Disclosures (Pihos)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Creates the Higher Education Textbook Act. Requires IBHE and ICCB, in collaboration with affiliated bookstores and student and faculty representatives, to adopt rules requiring that affiliated bookstores (1) provide students the option of purchasing materials that are unbundled when possible, disclose to faculty and staff the costs to students of purchasing materials, and disclose publicly how new editions vary from previous editions; (2) actively promote and publicize book buy-back programs; and (3) disclose retail costs for course materials on a per course basis to faculty and staff and make this information publicly available. Requires faculty and staff members to consider the least costly practices in assigning course materials, such as adopting the least expensive edition available when educational content is comparable, as determined by the faculty or staff member, and working closely with publishers and affiliated bookstores to create bundles and packages if they deliver cost savings to students.

HB 3504 Clarification of Ethics Act (Granberg)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill amends the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act to classify community college districts as units of local government that must adopt resolutions regulating the political activities and the solicitation and acceptance of gifts by their officials and employees (now, community colleges are classified as state agencies subject to the entire Act's regulation and enforcement by the Executive Ethics Commission and the Governor's Executive Inspector General). Effective immediately. HB 3504 is identical to **SB 589**.

HB 3651 SURS 6% Limitation -- Annuity Calculation (Eddy)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the State Universities Article of the Illinois Pension Code. Provides that, if the final rate of earnings of an employee is \$30,000 or below and the employee is not receiving benefits under any other Article of the Code, then any salary increase in excess of 6% for any academic year used to determine the final rate of earnings under the Article over his or her earnings with the same employer for the previous academic year is exempt from provisions requiring the participant's employer to pay the present value of the increase in benefits resulting from the portion of the increase in earnings that is in excess of 6%. Effective immediately.

Senate Bill 179 Community College Wind Farms (Risinger)
ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Allows school districts and community college districts to own and operate wind generation turbine farms that directly or indirectly reduce energy or other operating costs. Effective immediately.

SB 313 Remedial Coursework at Universities (Maloney)
ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the Board of Higher Education Act and the Higher Education Student Assistance Act. Provides that if a state university determines that a student needs remedial coursework, then the university must require that the student complete the remedial course work before pursuing his or her course of study. Provides that a student is not ineligible for MAP consideration if (1) a state university that the student was enrolled at required that the student complete remedial coursework; (2) by subtracting the total number of semester credit hours, not to exceed 15 semester credit hours, of required remedial course work that the student successfully completed and received award payments for, the student has received less than the equivalent of 135 semester credit hours of award payments; and (3) the student began his or her post-secondary course of study during the 2007-08 academic year.

SB 401 Community College Board Meeting Schedules (Demuzio)
ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA initiative would amend the Public Community College Act to provide that public notice of the schedule of regular meetings of a board of trustees for the next calendar year, as set at the organizational meeting of the board of trustees, must be given at the beginning of that calendar year. The bill clarifies language differences between the Open Meetings Act and the Public Community College Act. SB401 is identical to **HB 721**.

SB 402 Community College Board Quorum (Demuzio)
ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill amends the Public Community College Act to provide that for all meetings of a board of trustees, a quorum of members must be physically present at the location of the meeting. The bill clarifies language differences between the Open Meetings Act and the Public Community College Act. SB 402 is identical to **HB 720**.

SB 420 Open Meetings Act -- E-mail or Vacation Attendance (Hultgren)
ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Open Meetings Act. Provides that the e-mail distribution of materials for the individual use of a public body's members is not a violation of the Act. With respect to public bodies with statewide jurisdiction, provides that no per diem payments shall be made to members who attend meetings by electronic means or by audio or video conference. Provides that at a meeting of a public body with less than statewide jurisdiction at which a majority of a quorum of members must be physically present, provides that a majority of the physically present members (now, a majority of the members) may allow the attendance of other members by audio or video conference for the reasons specified by the Act. Adds vacation outside the territorial limits of the jurisdiction of the public body to that list of reasons.

SB 433 Guidance Counseling for Community College Students (Maloney)
ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Public Community College Act. Provides that the board of each community college district shall require all of its full-time students who are in their first year of attendance at the community college, including transfer students, to meet with a guidance counselor or academic advisor at the community college to discuss course selection at least once during the student's first year of attendance, preferably during the first semester of attendance.

SB 437 State Scholar Grants (Maloney)
ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Higher Education Student Assistance Act. Provides that, subject to appropriation, each State Scholar who enrolls or is enrolled in an institution of higher learning in Illinois shall also receive a one-time grant of \$1,000 to be applied to tuition and mandatory fees and paid directly to the institution of higher learning. Adds a provision concerning ISAC's rule-making authority as it relates to the State Scholar Program.

SB 519 College Savings Program (Clayborne)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the State Treasurer Act. Removes the requirement that the State Treasurer adjust each account at least annually to ensure compliance with the requirements of the College Savings Pool. Provides that the Treasurer shall limit the contributions that may be made on behalf of a designated College Savings Pool beneficiary based on the limitations established by the Internal Revenue Service (now, based on an actuarial estimate of what is required to pay tuition, fees, and room and board for 5 undergraduate years at the highest cost eligible educational institution). Amends the Illinois Income Tax Act. Provides that for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2007, distributions from certain qualified tuition programs under the Internal Revenue Code that are administered by other states are exempt from the requirement that a distribution from an Internal Revenue Code qualified tuition program be included when determining adjusted gross income for purposes of determining base income. Requires taxpayers to add to their base income an amount equal to the amount previously deducted for deposits into a qualified tuition program if the moneys are transferred from a qualified tuition program that is administered by the state to an out-of-state program. Makes other changes.

SB 589 Clarification of Ethics Act (Halvorson)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This bill was introduced at ICCTA's request to amend the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act and classify community college districts as units of local government that must adopt resolutions regulating the political activities and the solicitation and acceptance of gifts by their officials and employees (currently, community colleges are classified as state agencies subject to the entire Act's regulation and enforcement by the Executive Ethics Commission and the Governor's Executive Inspector General). Effective immediately. SB 589 is identical to **HB 3504**.

SB 674 Student Referendum All-American Energy Act (Maloney)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Creates the Student Referendum All-American Energy Act. Provides that students at a public institution of higher education may, by a majority vote of the students participating in a referendum, authorize the imposition of an All-American Energy Fee on students. Provides that the revenues of an All-American Energy Fee must be used for energy conservation measures in student residence halls or purchasing renewable energy resources to provide power for student residence halls or both. Provides that the referendum for an All-American Energy Fee must be submitted to a vote of the student body if a petition for such a vote is signed by no fewer than 300 students currently enrolled. If approved, the fee, which must not exceed \$10 per full-time student per term, must be imposed on students at the start of the next following term. Requires IBHE to report to the Governor and General Assembly no later than 2 years following the effective date of the Act concerning the fee.

SB 729 College Campus Press Act (Garrett)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Creates the College Campus Press Act. Provides that all campus media produced primarily by students at a state-sponsored institution of higher learning is a public forum for expression by the student journalists and editors at the particular institution. Provides that campus media, whether campus-sponsored or noncampus-sponsored, is not subject to prior review by public officials of those institutions. Provides that collegiate student editors of campus media are responsible for determining the news, opinions, feature content, and advertising content of campus media. Provides for an exception for teaching professional standards of grammar and journalism. Prohibits a collegiate media adviser from being terminated, transferred, removed, otherwise disciplined, or retaliated against for refusing to suppress protected free expression rights of collegiate student journalists and of collegiate student editors. Allows a collegiate student or collegiate media adviser to commence a civil action to obtain appropriate injunctive and declaratory relief; provides for the awarding of attorney's fees. Distinguishes campus policy. Allows for discipline for unprotected speech. Contains a severability clause.

SB 1278 Clarification of Community Colleges as Units of Local Government (Dillard)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill amends the Higher Education Cooperation Act to provide that the term "public institutions of higher learning" under the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act does not include public community colleges and community college districts. Removes community colleges from the definition of state employee.

SB 1414 Increase in Safety Bond Authorization (Haine)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill amends the Public Community College Act to allow a community college district to levy a tax or issue bonds for alteration or repair of physical facilities for certain health, safety, energy conservation, environmental protection, and handicapped accessibility purposes. Provides that the district may levy the tax if, among other conditions, a certified estimate of a licensed architect or engineer stating the estimated amount (instead of stating the estimated amount of not less than \$25,000) that is necessary to make alterations or repairs has been secured by the district. Provides that the district may borrow money in not to exceed the aggregate amount of \$4,500,000 during any one calendar year (instead of allowing the district to borrow money not in excess of \$4,500,000 in the aggregate at any one time). Provides that the district may borrow money if, among other conditions, a certified estimate of a licensed architect or engineer stating the estimated amount (instead of stating the estimated amount of not less than \$25,000) has been secured by the district.

SB 1446 “We Want To Learn English” Initiative (Sandoval)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Public Community College Act. Requires the ICCB to establish and administer a “We Want to Learn English Initiative” to provide resources for immigrants and refugees in Illinois to learn English in order to move towards becoming full members of American society. Provides that each fiscal year, the Board shall include in its budget proposal \$25,000,000 in funding for the Initiative. Provides that no less than half of the funds appropriated for the Initiative each fiscal year shall be disbursed to community-based, not-for-profit organizations, immigrant social service organizations, faith-based organizations, and on-site job training programs.

SB 1455 Higher Education Revolving Loan Program (Sandoval)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Higher Education Student Assistance Act and the State Finance Act. Requires ISAC to implement and administer a higher education revolving loan program to provide nominal interest loans for the costs of attending a public or private institution of higher education in Illinois. Provides that the loans must be made to high-performance students and may not exceed \$10,000 per person per academic year. Contains provisions concerning repayment. Creates the Higher Education Revolving Loan Fund as a special fund in the state treasury. Effective July 1, 2007.

SB 1731 Whistleblower Referenda (Kotowski)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Whistleblower Reward and Protection Act. Provides that the electors of any school district, public community college district, municipality, municipal corporation, or unit of local government may pass, by initiative petition and referendum, a binding ordinance adopting the provisions of the Act (at present, these entities may adopt the provisions of the Act by ordinance or resolution). Provides the requirements for filing a petition and hearing an objection to a petition.

ICCTA’s Lobby Day is Wednesday, April 25, in Springfield

■ For additional legislative updates, call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282 ■

Illinois Community College Trustees Association Action Alert

March 15, 2007

The Illinois General Assembly will complete its work for the week when the House and Senate adjourn later this afternoon. Lawmakers are scheduled to return to Springfield next Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. A full legislative update will be available next week.

ACTION NEEDED

House Bill 3504 -- a clarification of the State Ethics Act as it applies to community colleges -- is moving through the legislative process and requires your assistance to further advance the bill.

Contact your Illinois House members by Thursday, March 22, and ask them to support House Bill 3504 when it comes up for a vote in the next few weeks. Please request that your State Representative consider becoming a sponsor of HB 3504. If your State Representative is a sponsor of the bill, thank him/her for supporting the legislation.

HB 3504 -- Clarification of Ethics Act

(chief sponsor: Granberg; chief co-sponsors -- Froelich, Black)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA-initiated bill clarifies that community colleges are units of local government with respect to the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act Ethics Act, and as such are not under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Inspector General. The bill amends the Ethics Act to classify community college districts as units of local government that must adopt resolutions regulating the political activities and the solicitation and acceptance of gifts by their officials and employees (currently, community colleges are classified as state agencies subject to the entire Act's regulation and enforcement by the Executive Ethics Commission and the Governor's Executive Inspector General). **HB 3504 passed out of the State Government Administration Committee on a vote of 11-0 and is placed on the 2nd reading calendar.**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: ICCTA's Lobby Day is Wednesday, April 25, in Springfield

*** For additional legislative updates, call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282 ***

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Illinois Community College Trustees Association Action Alert

March 29, 2007

As of Thursday, March 29, the following bills have passed out of the Illinois House of Representatives and will be sent to the Illinois Senate for consideration. To view roll calls for various votes, go to the Illinois General Assembly's website at www.ilga.gov and type in the bill number (i.e., "HB3504") in the "Search by Number" box.

House Bill 3504 -- Clarification of Ethics Act (Granberg and others)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill amends the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act to classify community college districts as units of local government that must adopt resolutions regulating the political activities and the solicitation and acceptance of gifts by their officials and employees (now, community colleges are classified as state agencies subject to the entire Act's regulation and enforcement by the Executive Ethics Commission and the Governor's Executive Inspector General). Effective immediately. **PASSED out of the House of Representatives 98-14-0.**

HB 414 -- Student Housing at Community Colleges (Schock)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Permits community college districts comprised of 8 or more counties to provide for student housing. **PASSED out of the House of Representatives 82-32-0.**

HB 479 -- Full Funding of Military Scholarships (Black and others)

Requires full funding of Illinois Veterans Grants and other military scholarships. **PASSED out of the House of Representatives 114-1-0.**

The Illinois Senate is also in session and bills are beginning to move in that chamber as well.

SB 753 -- Clarification of Ethics Act (Halvorson and others)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Senate Bill 753 was amended at ICCTA's request to include the language originally contained in Senate Bill 589. Identical to **HB 3504**, it amends the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act to classify community college districts as units of local government that must adopt resolutions regulating the political activities and the solicitation and acceptance of gifts by their officials and employees (currently, community colleges are classified as state agencies subject to the entire Act's regulation and enforcement by the Executive Ethics Commission and the Governor's Executive Inspector General). Effective immediately. **SB 753 is currently on 3rd reading in the Senate.**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: ICCTA's Lobby Day is Wednesday, April 25, in Springfield

*** For additional legislative updates, call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282 ***

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Illinois Community College Trustees Association Action Alert

March 30, 2007

Ethics Act bill passes Illinois Senate

Senate Bill 753 (sponsored by Senate majority leader Debbie Halvorson) unanimously passed out of the Illinois Senate this morning. SB 753 amends the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act to classify community college districts as units of local government that must adopt resolutions regulating the political activities and the solicitation and acceptance of gifts by their officials and employees (currently, community colleges are classified as state agencies subject to the entire Act's regulation and enforcement by the Executive Ethics Commission and the Governor's Executive Inspector General). The bill now moves to the Illinois House for consideration. An identical bill, **House Bill 3504**, passed the House yesterday and will move to the Senate for consideration.

Later today, members of the Senate will join state representatives in returning to their home districts for a two-week break during the Easter and Passover holidays.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

ICCTA's Lobby Day is Wednesday, April 25, in Springfield

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ICCTA ACTION ALERT

May 11, 2007

The Illinois General Assembly completed its work for the week and adjourned the session Thursday afternoon. Both houses of the General Assembly are scheduled to return to Springfield next week. Although the session adjournment is scheduled for May 31, 2007, most observers predict that the spring session could continue well beyond that date. The dominant issues before lawmakers continue to be: 1) the Governor's proposed Gross Receipts Tax; 2) utilities issues involving Ameren and Commonwealth Edison; and 3) the FY 2008 state budget.

*On Wednesday, the Governor appeared before the Illinois House Committee of the Whole for two hours to provide testimony supporting his proposed Gross Receipts Tax on business. On Thursday afternoon, the Illinois House voted 000 - 107 to support passage of the Gross Receipts Tax. (The proposal received **no** affirmative votes.) Gov. Blagojevich has warned that failure to approve the Gross Receipts Tax or some form of it will impact state funding of programs and agencies.*

Significant legislation filed and affecting community colleges and all of higher education is advancing through both the House and the Senate:

BILLS AFFECTING COMMUNITY COLLEGES

House Bill 414 Student Housing at Community Colleges (Schock / Jacobs)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the Public Community College Act to permit a board of trustees to provide or contract for residential housing for students and employees at a community college campus. In the Article concerning building programs, removes dormitories from the definition of "facilities" which currently prevents community colleges from becoming involved with student housing. The bill has been amended to become allowable in community college districts comprised of eight or more counties. **HB 414 passed out of the House and is scheduled for a Senate hearing.**

HB 479 Veterans Grants Appropriations (Black / Righter)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Creates the Continuing Appropriation for Military Scholarships Act to require a General Revenue Fund recommendation by the Governor in the annual budget and annual General Revenue Fund appropriations by the General Assembly sufficient to reimburse institutions of higher learning in this state for not charging students tuition and fees under the Veteran Grant program, the Illinois National Guard Grant and Naval Militia Grant program, and the MIA/POW Scholarship program. Requires an irrevocable and continuing appropriation if the General Assembly fails to make sufficient appropriations. **HB 479 passed out of the House and is held in the Senate Rules Committee.**

HB 703 ISAC MAP Grant Limitations (Miller / Harmon)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Women Employed initiated this bill to provide that the Monetary Award Program grant amount must not exceed the amount that equals the average tuition and necessary fees for undergraduate students at public universities in this state for the academic year no more than 2 years prior to the academic year for which grant assistance is being requested (now the amount is \$4,968) or the amount that equals the average tuition and necessary fees for undergraduate students at public universities in this state for the academic year for which grant assistance is being requested (instead of the amount that equals 2 semesters or 3 quarters tuition and other necessary fees required generally by the institution of higher learning of all full-time undergraduate students). **HB 703 passed out the House and is on final passage in the Senate.**



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HB 720 Community College Board Quorum (Black / Demuzio)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This is an ICCTA bill to amend the Public Community College Act and provide that for all meetings of a board of trustees, a quorum of members must be physically present at the location of the meeting. The bill clarifies language differences between the Open Meetings Act and the Public Community College Act. **HB 720 passed out the House and is on final passage in the Senate.**

HB 721 Community College Board Meeting Schedules (Black / Demuzio)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This is another ICCTA bill that amends the Public Community College Act to provide that public notice of the schedule of regular meetings of a board of trustees for the next calendar year, as set at the organizational meeting of the board of trustees, must be given at the beginning of that calendar year. The bill clarifies language differences between the Open Meetings Act and the Public Community College Act. The bill is identical to SB 401. **HB 721 passed out the House and is on final passage in the Senate.**

HB 1276 Kaskaskia College - shell bill (Granberg)

ICCTA Position: OPPOSED to the concept

This is a shell bill that adds a section concerning trustee subdistricts for Kaskaskia College. The bill contains only a caption and contains no content. **HB 1276 was held in House Rules Committee.**

HB 1348 Lincoln Land Community College Subdistricts Clarification (Hannig)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Public Community College Act with respect to the trustee districts in Community College District No. 526. Provides that all counties, townships, census tracts, block groups, blocks, annexations, and natural boundaries are those that appear on maps published by the United States. Permits the State Board of Elections to clarify certain boundaries. **HB 1348 passed out the House and is on final passage in the Senate.**

HB 1434 Harper College Baccalaureate Degree Pilot Program (Crespo)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Public Community College Act to provide that William Rainey Harper College may create a pilot baccalaureate program under which the district may establish and offer bachelor's degrees in 2 fields of study if certain conditions are met, including requiring (i) that the degree programs not compete with any nearby public university, (ii) that the district identify and document unmet workforce needs, (iii) that the degree programs not require any additional funding from local taxes or the state, (iv) that the Illinois Community College Board and the Board of Higher Education approve the offering of the degree programs, and (v) that the pilot program expire 4 years after the initial offering of the degree programs, unless otherwise extended by law. **HB 1434 passed out of the House and is scheduled for a Senate hearing.**

HB 3476 General Assembly Scholarships at Community Colleges (Chapa LaVia)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Provides that a General Assembly scholarship (tuition waiver) may be used at a public community college, not just a state university. Amends the State Mandates Act to require implementation without reimbursement. Effective July 1, 2007. Provides that in the case of a scholarship for a community college, the designated community college must be within the community college district where the nominee resides or the designated community college must have a reciprocal tuition agreement for in-district rates with the community college district where the nominee resides (instead of requiring the scholarship to be used at a community college located in the legislative district of the legislator making the scholarship nomination); makes related changes. Provides that if the nominee changes his or her residence to a location outside of the community college district where he or she was residing and the designated community college does not have a reciprocal tuition agreement for in-district rates with the community college district where the nominee now resides, then the nominating member may terminate the scholarship at the conclusion of the college year in which the nominee is then enrolled. **HB 3476 remains on 3rd reading in the House.**

HB 3504 Ethics Act - Local Control of Community Colleges (Granberg)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill amends the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act to classify community college districts as units of local government that must adopt resolutions regulating the political activities and the solicitation and acceptance of gifts by their officials and employees (now, classified as state agencies subject to the entire Act's regulation and enforcement by the Executive Ethics Commission and the Governor's Executive Inspector General). Effective immediately. The bill is identical to SB 753 (Halvorson). **HB 3504 passed out the House and is on 2nd reading in the Senate.**

Senate Bill 313 Remedial Coursework at Universities (Maloney)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the Board of Higher Education Act and the Higher Education Student Assistance Act. Provides that if a state university determines that a student needs remedial coursework, then the university must require that the student complete the remedial course work before pursuing his or her course of study. Provides that a student is not ineligible for Monetary Award Program consideration if (1) a state university that the student was enrolled at required that the student complete remedial coursework; (2) by subtracting the total number of semester credit hours, not to exceed 15 semester credit hours, of required remedial course work that the student successfully completed and received award payments for, the student has received less than the equivalent of 135 semester credit hours of award payments; and (3) the student began his or her post-secondary course of study during the 2007-2008 academic year. **SB 313 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 325 Textbook Advisory Committee (Hunter / Burke)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Creates the Textbook Advisory Committee Act and requires a textbook advisory committee to be established in the office of the provost or chief academic officer of each public institution of higher education in this state. Specifies who must serve on the committee. Provides that a committee shall establish and implement certain policies with respect to textbooks. Provides that the committee shall include publishers. Makes changes concerning a committee's policies, including (1) providing that the requirement for disclosure of the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) is applicable so long as disclosure does not conflict with or impair the contractual rights of a private third party that operates the on-campus college bookstore on behalf of the public institution of higher education, (2) changing the exception to the prohibition on employees and departments from demanding or receiving anything of value as an inducement for the selection of a specific textbook or supplemental material for use in a course for sample copies, instructor's copies, or instructional materials, (3) allowing a policy to foster the establishment of textbook reserves so long as all materials provided adhere to applicable federal copyright laws, and (4) removing the provision providing for the encouragement of buy-back programs to expand the availability of used textbooks. Provides that the committee shall report annually to the Board of Higher Education or the Illinois Community College Board, as appropriate, on measures undertaken to reduce textbook costs and provide students with cost-saving alternatives. **SB 325 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 326 Textbook Consumer Information Act (Hunter / Burke)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Creates the Textbook Consumer Information Act. Provides that when contacting prospective clients, each publisher of college textbooks shall disclose to the faculty member or, where applicable, the other entity in charge of selecting textbooks for courses taught at a public institution of higher education (i) the price at which the publisher would make the textbooks and supplementary learning materials available to a college bookstore and (ii) the history of revisions for such products. Provides that any faculty member or entity in charge of selecting textbooks for courses taught at an institution must provide a written statement to the college bookstore placing an order for textbooks detailing all textbooks and supplementary learning materials required for each course, all textbooks and supplementary learning materials suggested for each course, and the earliest edition of any required textbook that may be purchased by a student for that course. **SB 326 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 327 No State Sales Tax on Textbooks (Hunter / Jacobsson)

ICCTA Position: Monitor

Provides that, beginning July 1, 2007, the tax with respect to textbooks required for use at state universities and public community colleges or certain other institutions of higher learning is imposed under these Acts at the rate of 1.25% (eliminating the state's portion of the tax). Authorizes the Department of Revenue to adopt rules. Amends the State Finance Act to adjust the distribution with respect to this tax. **SB 327 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 401 Community College Board Meeting Schedules (Demuzio)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill amends the Public Community College Act to provide that public notice of the schedule of regular meetings of a board of trustees for the next calendar year, as set at the organizational meeting of the board of trustees, must be given at the beginning of that calendar year. The bill clarifies language differences between the Open Meetings Act and the Public Community College Act. The bill is identical to HB 721. **SB 401 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 402 Community College Board Quorum (Black)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill amends the Public Community College Act to provide that for all meetings of a board of trustees, a quorum of members must be physically present at the location of the meeting. The bill clarifies language differences between the Open Meetings Act and the Public Community College Act. The bill is identical to HB 720. **SB 402 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 420 Open Meetings Act -- E-mail or Vacation Attendance (Hultgran)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Open Meetings Act. Provides that the e-mail distribution of materials for the individual use of a public body's members is not a violation of the Act. With respect to public bodies with statewide jurisdiction, provides that no per diem payments shall be made to members who attend meetings by electronic means or by audio or video conference. Provides that at a meeting of a public body with less than statewide jurisdiction at which a majority of a quorum of members must be physically present, provides that a majority of the physically present members (now, a majority of the members) may allow the attendance of other members by audio or video conference for the reasons specified by the Act. Adds vacation outside the territorial limits of the jurisdiction of the public body to that list of reasons. **SB 420 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 433 Guidance Counseling for Community College Students (Maloney)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Public Community College Act. Provides that the board of each community college district shall require all of its full-time students who are in their first year of attendance at the community college, including transfer students, to meet with a guidance counselor or academic advisor at the community college to discuss course selection at least once during the student's first year of attendance, preferably during the first semester of attendance. **SB 433 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 437 State Scholars Program (Maloney)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Higher Education Student Assistance Act. Provides that, subject to appropriation, each State Scholar who enrolls or is enrolled in an institution of higher learning in this state shall also receive a one-time grant of \$1,000 to be applied to tuition and mandatory fees and paid directly to the institution of higher learning. Adds a provision concerning the rule-making authority of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission as it relates to the State Scholar Program. **SB 437 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 519 College Savings Program (Clayborne)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the State Treasurer Act. Removes the requirement that the State Treasurer adjust each account at least annually to ensure compliance with the requirements of the College Savings Pool. Provides that the Treasurer shall limit the contributions that may be made on behalf of a designated College Savings Pool beneficiary based on the limitations established by the Internal Revenue Service (now, based on an actuarial estimate of what is required to pay tuition, fees, and room and board for 5 undergraduate years at the highest cost eligible educational institution). Amends the Illinois Income Tax Act. Provides that for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2007, distributions from certain qualified tuition programs under the Internal Revenue Code that are administered by other states are exempt from the requirement that a distribution from an Internal Revenue Code qualified tuition program be included when determining adjusted gross income for purposes of determining base income. Requires taxpayers to add to their base income an amount equal to the amount previously deducted for deposits into a qualified tuition program if the moneys are transferred from a qualified tuition program that is administered by the state to an out-of-state program. **SB 519 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 729 College Campuses Press Act (Garrett)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Creates the College Campus Press Act. Provides that all campus media produced primarily by students at a state-sponsored institution of higher learning is a public forum for expression by the student journalists and editors at the particular institution. Provides that campus media, whether campus-sponsored or noncampus-sponsored, is not subject to prior review by public officials of those institutions. Provides that collegiate student editors of campus media are responsible for determining the news, opinions, feature content, and advertising content of campus media. Provides for an exception for teaching professional standards of grammar and journalism. Prohibits a collegiate media adviser from being terminated, transferred, removed, otherwise disciplined, or retaliated against for refusing to suppress protected free expression rights of collegiate student journalists and of collegiate student editors. Allows a collegiate student or collegiate media adviser to commence a civil action to obtain appropriate injunctive and declaratory relief; provides for the awarding of attorney's fees. Distinguishes campus policy. Allows for discipline for unprotected speech. Contains a severability clause. **SB 729 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 753 Ethics Act - Local Control of Community Colleges (Halvorson)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill amends the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act to classify community college districts as units of local government that must adopt resolutions regulating the political activities and the solicitation and acceptance of gifts by their officials and employees (now, classified as State agencies subject to the entire Act's regulation and enforcement by the Executive Ethics Commission and the Governor's Executive Inspector General). Effective immediately. The bill is identical to HB 3504 (Granberg). **SB 753 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 1414 Increase in Safety Bond Authorization (Haine)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This is an ICCTA bill to amend the Public Community College Act to make changes allowing a community college district to levy a tax or issue bonds for alteration or repair of physical facilities for certain health, safety, energy conservation, environmental protection, and handicapped accessibility purposes. Provides that the district may levy the tax if, among other conditions, a certified estimate of a licensed architect or engineer stating the estimated amount (instead of stating the estimated amount of not less than \$25,000) that is necessary to make alterations or repairs has been secured by the district. Provides that the district may borrow money in not to exceed the aggregate amount of \$4,500,000 during any one calendar year (instead of allowing the district to borrow money not in excess of \$4,500,000 in the aggregate at any one time). Provides that the district may borrow money if, among other conditions, a certified estimate of a licensed architect or engineer stating the estimated amount (instead of stating the estimated amount of not less than \$25,000) has been secured by the district. **SB 1414 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House. (The bill may be amended to limit its application.)**

SB 1446 **“We Want To Learn English” Initiative (Sandoval)**

ICCTA Position: **MONITOR**

Amends the Public Community College Act. Permits the Illinois Community College Board to establish and administer a “We Want to Learn English Initiative” to provide resources for immigrants and refugees in this state to learn English in order to move towards becoming full members of American society. Provides that each fiscal year, the Board shall include in its budget proposal \$25,000,000 in funding for the Initiative. Provides that no less than half of the funds appropriated for the Initiative each fiscal year shall be disbursed to community-based, not-for-profit organizations, immigrant social service organizations, faith-based organizations, and on-site job training programs. **SB 1446 has passed the Senate and will be scheduled for hearing in the House.**

■ **For additional legislative updates, call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282** ■

Illinois Community College Trustees Association Action Alert

May 21, 2007

General Assembly Approves Community College Ethics Legislation

The Illinois Senate unanimously approved House Bill 3504 on Friday afternoon, May 18, just before adjourning for the week. The bill, which was sponsored by Rep. Kurt Granberg in the House and Sen. Gary Forby in the Senate, now goes to the Governor for his consideration.

The Illinois House had approved the bill by a vote of 98-14-0 on March 29. The Senate vote was 55-0-0.

HB 3504 addresses local control issues for community colleges within the State's Ethics Act. The legislation clarifies that community college districts are units of local government and are addressed in the local government section of the State's Ethics Act. The bill will become law if the Governor approves it.

Community College Bills That Have Passed Both Houses of the General Assembly

House Bill 3504 -- Ethics Act / Local Control of Community Colleges (Granberg / Forby)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill amends the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act to classify community college districts as units of local government that must adopt resolutions regulating the political activities and the solicitation and acceptance of gifts by their officials and employees (now, classified as state agencies subject to the entire Act's regulation and enforcement by the Executive Ethics Commission and the Governor's Executive Inspector General). Effective immediately. The bill is identical to Senate Bill 753 (Halvorson).

HB 720 -- Community College Board Quorum (Black / Demuzio)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill amends the Public Community College Act and provides that for all meetings of a board of trustees, a quorum of members must be physically present at the location of the meeting. The bill clarifies language differences between the Open Meetings Act and the Public Community College Act.

HB 721-- Community College Board Meeting Schedules (Black / Demuzio)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill amends the Public Community College Act to provide that public notice of the schedule of regular meetings of a board of trustees for the next calendar year, as set at the organizational meeting of the board of trustees, must be given at the beginning of that calendar year. The bill clarifies language differences between the Open Meetings Act and the Public Community College Act. The bill is identical to SB 401.

*** For additional legislative updates, call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282 ***

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Illinois Community College Trustees Association Action Alert

June 22, 2007

Overtime Session Update

The Illinois General Assembly has entered its third week of overtime session after failing to complete business by its scheduled May 31 adjournment date. The Illinois House of Representatives has scheduled every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday during June to meet in Springfield, while the Illinois Senate is establishing a schedule on a daily basis.

By not completing its work by May 31, the voting requirement for the immediate passage of legislation changes from a simple majority to a 3/5 majority vote. This voting requirement significantly changes the political dynamics because Democrats (who maintain the majority in each chamber) do not have a 3/5 majority in the House. Therefore, Republican votes are now required for the immediate passage of legislation, including a Fiscal Year 2008 state budget. Prior to May 31, Republicans had not been formally included in budget negotiations and other significant legislative proposals.

June 30 marks the end of Fiscal Year 2007 and will be the next major deadline facing lawmakers. Gov. Rod Blagojevich and the legislative leaders in the House and Senate tentatively agreed yesterday (June 21) to adopt a **"bare bones" state budget for the month of July**, which would temporarily avoid a state government shutdown on July 1 and provide additional time for legislators to complete budget negotiations. If a state budget is not approved by both houses and the Governor by June 30, the state enters a time where it lacks legal authorization to make expenditures for payroll, certain grants, and payments to vendors.

The major issues before lawmakers continue to be: 1) the source of new state revenues, if any; 2) the FY 2008 budget; and 3) utility rate increases involving Ameron CILCO and Commonwealth Edison. Many observers believe that all issues must be resolved simultaneously in order for the General Assembly to complete its work. During the budget negotiating process, the governor has been scheduling additional meetings to talk about the Chicago Transit Authority, pension system problems, leasing the Illinois Lottery, and Cook County property tax assessment cap issues. While legislative leaders and the governor are meeting periodically to negotiate these issues, rank and file members are processing noncontroversial bills and resolutions that often times generate unanimous roll calls.

Community College Bills of Interest

LEGISLATION OPPOSED BY ICCTA

House Bill 1876 -- Kaskaskia College Subdistricts (Granberg)

ICCTA Position: OPPOSE

While rank-and-file General lawmakers wait for negotiated agreements to be reached, it becomes possible for legislation to be considered that probably would not have been considered during the regular session. **House Bill 1876** provides that the Kaskaskia College district be divided into seven subdistricts and that board members must be elected from a subdistrict. The bill overrules the locally passed referendum that established Kaskaskia College and **does not submit the question to the voters of the district for approval**. ICCTA opposes this legislation because it also **diminishes local control** of the board by allowing the General Assembly to determine the subdistricts. Other units of local government always determine their own subdistricts.

Status: Please contact your Senator and House member and ask them to OPPOSE HB 1876.

- continued on next page -

ICCTA Action Alert
Page 2
June 22, 2007

LEGISLATION SUPPORTED BY ICCTA

House Bill 3504 -- Ethics Act / Local Control of Community Colleges (Granberg / Forby)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill amends the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act to classify community college districts as units of local government that must adopt resolutions regulating the political activities and the solicitation and acceptance of gifts by their officials and employees (now, classified as state agencies subject to the entire Act's regulation and enforcement by the Executive Ethics Commission and the Governor's Executive Inspector General). Effective immediately. The bill is identical to Senate Bill 753 (Halvorson).

Status: HB 3504 has passed both houses and was sent to Gov. Blagojevich on June 15. The Governor has 60 days in which to sign, veto or amendatorily veto this bill. ICCTA has asked the Governor to SIGN HB 3504.

HB 720 -- Community College Board Quorum (Black / Demuzio)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill amends the Public Community College Act and provides that for all meetings of a board of trustees, a quorum of members must be physically present at the location of the meeting. The bill clarifies language differences between the Open Meetings Act and the Public Community College Act.

Status: HB 720 has passed both houses and was sent to Gov. Blagojevich on June 14. ICCTA has asked the Governor to SIGN HB 720.

HB 721-- Community College Board Meeting Schedules (Black / Demuzio)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill amends the Public Community College Act to provide that public notice of the schedule of regular meetings of a board of trustees for the next calendar year, as set at the organizational meeting of the board of trustees, must be given at the beginning of that calendar year. The bill clarifies language differences between the Open Meetings Act and the Public Community College Act. The bill is identical to SB 401.

Status: HB 721 has passed both houses and was sent to Gov. Blagojevich on June 14. ICCTA has asked the Governor to SIGN HB 721.

**** For additional legislative updates, call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282 ****

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ICCTA ACTION ALERT

July 16, 2007

OVERTIME SESSION UPDATE

The Illinois General Assembly is continuing its marathon overtime session. The Governor has called eight Special Sessions, one after the other, requiring legislators to be in Springfield nearly every day since July 5. An exception was made when a Special Session was not called for Sunday, July 15. Lawmakers have returned to Springfield today (Monday, July 16) for another Special Session.

The Governor has authority to call the General Assembly into session by calling for a Special Session and is using this authority in an attempt to resolve the current budget impasse. A temporary one-month budget for FY 2008 was earlier approved to prevent state government from shutting down during the extended negotiations between the Governor and legislative leaders. It is widely accepted that the temporary budget will enable state government to continue operating through the first week in August. There currently appears to be no end in sight for the budget impasse.

The following are the topics for each of the eight Special Sessions that have been called through July 14, 2007:

Special Session 1: Pensions

Special Session 2: Pensions funding resolutions

Special Session 3: State Employees Retirement System (SERS)

Special Session 4: Child Support Administrative Fund

Special Session 5: State Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) and State Judges Retirement System (JRS)

Special Session 6: State Universities Retirement System (SURS) / grant funding for sexual assault victims assistance

Special Session 7: Supportive Living Program

Special Session 8: Senate Bill 1007 (prohibits ammunition clips holding more than 10 rounds)

LEGISLATION OF INTEREST TO COMMUNITY COLLEGES

(In addition to legislation reported in prior ICCTA *Action Alerts*)

House Joint Resolution Constitutional Amendment 24 -- 2/3 Majority Vote for Pension Legislation (Madigan)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

House Speaker Michael Madigan recently filed House Joint Resolution Constitutional Amendment (HJRCA) 24, which proposes a new provision in the Legislative Article of the Illinois Constitution that would require a 2/3 "super majority" vote in each chamber for passage of a bill "that would increase the benefits of members of any pension or retirement system of the State, any unit of local government or school district, or any agency or instrumentality thereof." Adoption of the resolution requires a 3/5 majority vote in each chamber in order for the proposition to be submitted to the electorate. A 3/5 majority vote is the highest current voting requirement in the General Assembly.

Senate Bill 1446 – We Want to Learn English Initiative (Sandoval)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Provides that the Illinois Community College Board may establish and administer a "We Want to Learn English Initiative"; that ICCB may include \$15,000,000 or less in its budget proposal for the Initiative; that if ICCB decides to disburse the funds appropriated for the Initiative, then it must disburse no less than half of the funds appropriated each fiscal year to community-based, not-for-profit organizations, immigrant social service organizations, faith-based organizations, and on-site job training programs; and that funds may be used only to provide programs that teach English to United States citizens, lawful permanent residents, and other persons residing in this state who are in lawful immigration status. **SB 1446 passed both houses on July 11 and will be sent to the Governor for consideration.**



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Illinois Community College Trustees Association Action Alert

August 8, 2007

Movement on FY 2008 Budget?

The Illinois General Assembly and the Governor have not yet reached an agreement regarding a state budget for Fiscal Year 2008. The Governor has now called a dozen special sessions to require state lawmakers to meet and resolve the budget issues, but no resolution has occurred.

The Illinois House of Representatives has scheduled a budget hearing for 5 PM this afternoon (Wednesday, August 8). One possible scenario is that the House committee will attempt to approve a Fiscal Year 2008 state budget today, and the full House would vote to send that proposal to the Illinois Senate on Thursday. The Senate could then approve a budget before the weekend. The scenario calls for the possibility that a capital appropriations bill could be developed either soon after a budget is approved or later in the year. These efforts could soon resolve the budget impasse.

The major budget issue for community colleges is the proposed funding level and allocation of any funding increase that is included in a budget agreement. ICCTA is recommending that funds should be added to Credit Hour and Equalization funding.

Community colleges are not immediately impacted by a delay in adopting a state budget. The first portion of a local community college budget that is provided from the state often times arrives at the college during mid September or later. Community colleges receive their state support quarterly during the fiscal year.

**** For additional legislative updates, call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282 ****

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Illinois Community College Trustees Association Action Alert

August 8, 2007

Kaskaskia College subdistricting bill passes Senate

The Illinois Senate has approved a measure that would require Kaskaskia College to divide its community college district into seven geographic subdistricts. **House Bill 1876** passed on a vote of 32 to 23 in the Senate and now must be returned to the House for a final vote. If approved, each Kaskaskia trustee would then be required to stand for election from a specific subdistrict.

The sponsors of HB 1876 stated during Senate debate that this legislation should be ***extended to apply to the entire state and each community college***. It is entirely possible that HB 1876 could soon be returned to the House for final action.

Attached is a flyer that ICCTA and the Illinois Presidents Council are circulating in the State Capitol regarding this issue.

Please contact your State Representatives (in the House only) on Thursday and ask them to OPPOSE passage of HB 1876. This legislation could establish a precedent to provide individual member subdistricts for all Illinois community colleges. Worse, the legislation requires that the Illinois General Assembly determine where the subdistricts shall be drawn and overrides the board's local authority.

**** For additional legislative updates, call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282 ****

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Vote No on Senate Amendment #1 to HB 1876

HB 1876 is on the order of Concurrence in the House. There is significant opposition to Senate Amendment #1.

Senate Amendment #1 is a 618 page amendment that became the bill. Amendment #1 attempts to create subdistricts for only one community college district in the state.

Currently only two of the 39 community college districts have subdistricts. One of those, Southwestern Illinois College, adopted the subdistrict structure by referendum of the voters of the district. The other, Lincoln Land Community College, was established by legislation without objection of the college.

The only community college affected by Senate Amendment #1, Kaskaskia College, **strongly objects** to the effort to create subdistricts. To this date, there have been no public requests for the subdistricts from any person or group of persons in the district. No input from the community or the college has been sought.

Additional reasons to vote NO to Concur to Senate Amendment #1 to HB 1876:

- This amendment would override local control of a unit of local government
- The General Assembly does not normally determine local district boundaries for units of local government
- If there is a public outcry for subdistricts (which there is not), the Illinois Public Community College Act provides a mechanism (110 ILCS 805/3-7c) to create subdistricts.
- The amendment is technically flawed in that it uses census track data which does not fit into community college districts well. Community College districts were originally based on high school or unit school district boundaries.

Please join the groups listed on the back side of this sheet in opposing Senate Amendment #1 to HB 1876.

ICCTA ACTION ALERT

August 15, 2007

Governor Vetoes HB 3504 (Local Control / Ethics Act Legislation)

Yesterday afternoon (August 14) Governor Rod Blagojevich vetoed House Bill 3504. The bill clarifies that community college districts are units of local government (rather than state agencies) for purposes of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act and are subject to local government standards and requirements for implementing ethics requirements.

The Governor's veto message is included below:

August 14, 2007

*To the Honorable Members of the Illinois House of Representatives
95th General Assembly*

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 9(b) of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby veto House Bill 3504, entitled "AN ACT concerning government." I recognize and appreciate the hard work of all the sponsors in passing this legislation. However, I believe that the provisions of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act should extend to community college districts.

For this reason, I hereby veto and return House Bill 3504.

*Sincerely,
ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH, Governor*

Many community colleges have jointly filed litigation with a DuPage County court to pursue the same remedy sought by HB 3504. The next scheduled court hearing on this litigation on August 22.

ICCTA's legislative team also is reviewing options regarding the Governor's veto of HB 3504.

2 Other Community College Bills Become Law

Two other community college bills have been signed into law. Both were sent to the Governor on June 14 and signed on August 13. The Governor used the full 60-day period that the Illinois Constitution provides for a governor to act upon legislation.

Senate Bill 401 **Community College Board Quorum** (Demuzio / Black)
ICCTA Position: **SUPPORT**

This ICCTA bill amends the Public Community College Act and provides that for all meetings of a board of trustees, a quorum of members must be physically present at the location of the meeting. The bill clarifies language differences between the Open Meetings Act and the Public Community College Act. **SB 401 is now Public Act 95-116.**

SB 402 **Community College Board Meeting Schedules** (Demuzio/ Black)
ICCTA Position: **SUPPORT**

This ICCTA bill amends the Public Community College Act to provide that public notice of the schedule of regular meetings of a board of trustees for the next calendar year, as set at the organizational meeting of the board of trustees, must be given at the beginning of that calendar year. The bill clarifies language differences between the Open Meetings Act and the Public Community College Act. **SB 402 is now Public Act 95-117.**



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ICCTA ACTION ALERT

August 21, 2007

COMMUNITY COLLEGES WIN LOCAL CONTROL LAWSUIT

Illinois community colleges won a lawsuit filed against the Illinois Executive Inspector General this morning. The ICCTA-coordinated action was filed in DuPage County Court last year to question the Inspector General's authority over community colleges.

Judge Duncan ruled for the community colleges, who disagreed with an Illinois Attorney General's opinion that stated that community colleges are state agencies and their employees are state employees for purposes of the State Government Officials and Employees Ethics Act. The DuPage County Court agreed with the colleges' argument that they are units of local government that are required to comply with the local government provisions (rather than the state agency provisions) of the Ethics Act.

The Court's ruling applies to the 35 community college districts that brought the suit. It is not yet known if the Attorney General will appeal the case. Attorneys representing the community colleges will be providing additional communications very soon.

*** For additional updates, call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282 ***



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Illinois Community College Trustees Association Action Alert

August 29, 2007

Last week Illinois community colleges successfully defended local control issues by winning a lawsuit filed in DuPage County. In this decision, the 18th Judicial Circuit Court reaffirmed that community college districts are ***units of local government*** and not state agencies. This means that community colleges are subject to the local government provisions of the State Government Officials and Employees Ethics Act and not the state provisions enforced by the Office of the Executive Inspector General.

Attached is a copy of the court's ruling.

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STATE OF ILLINOIS

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

COUNTY OF DU PAGE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE EIGHTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

Board of Trustees of Comm
College Dist. No. 501 et al

CASE NUMBER

2006 MR 1394

-vs-

James Wright

File Stamp Here

ORDER

This matter coming on to be heard, the Court being fully advised in the premises and having jurisdiction of the subject matter, IT IS ORDERED HEREBY:

1. Plaintiff's Motion for Summary judgment is granted in that Community Colleges are Units of Local Government and not State Agencies under the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act ^(Act) and for additional reasons stated on the record.

2. Defendant is permanently enjoined from exercising any jurisdiction over ^{Plaintiff} community colleges ^{parties to this action} by means of the Act

3. All ongoing investigations ~~conducted~~ ^{of Plaintiff Community Colleges} by Defendant shall cease as without jurisdiction.

4. Defendant's Motion to Stay this Court's decision is denied.

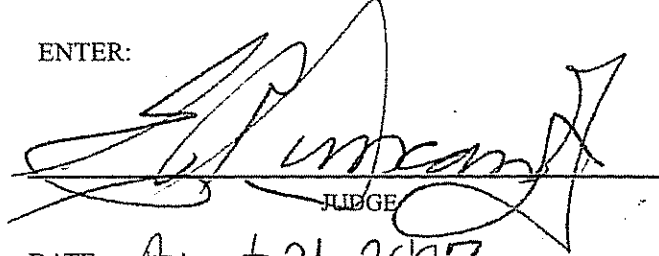
5. There is no just reason for delay in ~~en~~ enforcing this order. This is a final and appealable order.

6. Defendant's Motion for Summary Judgment is denied.

Name: Kan Flory, Robbins ^{Schwartz} PRO SE
DuPage Attorney No.: 71875
Attorney for: Plaintiff's
Address: 20 N. Clark, Ste 900
City/State/Zip: Chicago, IL 60602
Telephone: 312-332-7760

COPY

ENTER:


JUDGE

DATE: August 21, 2007

Illinois Community College Trustees Association Action Alert

August 29, 2007

Last week Gov. Rod Blagojevich exercised his veto authority and reduced over \$463 million in General Revenue funds from the Fiscal Year 2008 budget sent to him by the Illinois General Assembly.

The community college budget was reduced by \$10 million below the level approved by the General Assembly. Lawmakers had passed a \$7 million increase in credit hour grants, which amounted to an approximate 2% increase in overall funding. Additionally, the General Assembly had approved \$7.2 million in funding for Illinois Veterans Grants -- but that was included as a separate line item apart from the colleges' operating grants.

The Governor eliminated the \$7 million increase in credit hour grants and also eliminated the \$3 million Student Success grant to colleges. These reductions bring the community college budget to \$3 million below FY 2007 funding levels -- and amounts to a 1% reduction in overall funding compared to last year. The Veterans Grant funding was maintained at \$7.2 million.

Attached is a chart that shows community college funding levels during various times during the process:

- * The first column of the chart shows the college name.
- * The second column shows the amount of state funds the college received in FY 07.
- * The third column shows the FY08 budget that the General Assembly approved and sent to the Governor.
- * The fourth column shows the funding level after the Governor reduced (item reduction veto) the community college budget.
- * The fifth, sixth and seventh columns calculate the differences between the various columns.

The ICCTA legislative team is exploring options to recommend towards restoring community college funding to the levels approved by the General Assembly.

*** For additional updates, call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282 ***

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**Community College Funding
FY 07 compared to FY 08**

	FY2007 Operating Grant Final Allocations	FY2008 General Assembly Action	FY2008 with Governor's Veto	<i>Differences</i>		
				FY07 to General Assembly	FY07 to Governor's Action	FY08 General Assembly to Governor's Action
BLACK HAWK	9,010,522	8,981,813	8,781,812	-28,709	-228,710	-200,001
CHICAGO	58,296,062	57,678,039	55,892,006	-618,023	-2,404,056	-1,786,033
DANVILLE	3,620,828	3,679,761	3,601,731	58,933	-19,097	-78,030
DUPAGE	14,157,893	14,260,323	13,549,870	102,430	-608,023	-710,453
ELGIN	5,647,054	5,486,628	5,235,601	-160,426	-411,453	-251,027
HARPER	7,052,266	7,578,419	7,124,042	526,153	71,776	-454,377
HEARTLAND	2,213,739	2,263,897	2,133,705	50,158	-80,034	-130,192
HIGHLAND	2,615,333	2,711,608	2,626,428	96,275	11,095	-85,180
ILLINOIS CENTRAL	10,017,148	10,201,511	9,897,434	184,363	-119,714	-304,077
ILLINOIS EASTERN	13,617,901	14,999,932	14,763,791	1,382,031	1,145,890	-236,141
ILLINOIS VALLEY	3,298,672	3,507,312	3,382,886	208,640	84,214	-124,426
JOLIET	6,603,680	6,937,915	6,576,493	334,235	-27,187	-361,422
KANKAKEE	6,336,921	6,128,001	6,000,602	-208,920	-336,319	-127,399
KASKASKIA	8,405,523	8,923,012	8,780,968	517,489	375,445	-142,044
KISHWAUKEE	4,113,547	4,147,124	4,022,150	33,577	-91,397	-124,974
LAKE COUNTY	6,815,318	7,061,852	6,705,681	246,534	-109,637	-356,171
LAKE LAND	10,733,896	11,282,365	11,049,247	548,469	315,351	-233,118
LEWIS & CLARK	6,146,380	6,403,822	6,232,335	257,442	85,955	-171,487
LINCOLN LAND	4,256,836	4,793,102	4,583,321	536,266	326,485	-209,781
LOGAN	12,679,617	13,277,002	13,080,452	597,385	400,835	-196,550
MC HENRY	2,578,703	2,678,674	2,518,728	99,971	-59,975	-159,946
MORAIN VALLEY	8,596,661	8,505,429	8,046,963	-91,232	-549,698	-458,466
MORTON	3,167,103	2,957,053	2,841,950	-210,050	-325,153	-115,103
OAKTON	5,973,999	6,467,838	6,157,230	493,839	183,231	-310,608
PARKLAND	7,903,561	8,062,972	7,767,128	159,411	-136,433	-295,844
PRAIRIE STATE	2,612,901	2,742,480	2,579,202	129,579	-33,699	-163,278
REND LAKE	6,866,067	7,267,912	7,152,379	401,845	286,312	-115,533
RICHLAND	2,806,719	3,109,510	3,002,665	302,791	195,946	-106,845
ROCK VALLEY	5,626,669	5,715,739	5,462,971	89,070	-163,698	-252,768
SANDBURG	5,033,107	5,158,945	5,056,499	125,838	23,392	-102,446
SAUK VALLEY	2,572,519	2,777,780	2,700,641	205,261	128,122	-77,139
SHAWNEE	4,784,765	4,887,374	4,813,235	102,609	28,470	-74,139
SOUTH SUBURBAN	7,340,044	7,122,747	6,851,677	-217,297	-488,367	-271,070
SOUTHEASTERN	5,840,108	5,729,670	5,635,145	-110,438	-204,963	-94,525
SOUTHWESTERN	15,422,171	16,118,900	15,723,963	696,729	301,792	-394,937
SPOON RIVER	2,253,358	2,128,381	2,073,443	-124,977	-179,915	-54,938
TRITON	8,117,508	8,126,584	7,771,631	9,076	-345,877	-354,953
WAUBONSEE	4,377,486	4,669,256	4,430,086	291,770	52,600	-239,170
WOOD	3,246,015	3,227,918	3,152,509	-18,097	-93,506	-75,409
	300,758,600	307,758,600	297,758,600	7,000,000	-3,000,000	-10,000,000

Illinois Community College Trustees Association Action Alert
September 7, 2007

House Budget Hearings Scheduled

Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan has scheduled a series of 19 regional hearings to address the Governor's veto of the Fiscal Year 2008 budget. The hearings will run from September 12 through September 27 and are open to the public. Five of those hearings will take place on community college campuses.

The Governor's veto reduced state funding to community colleges by \$7 million for the Basic Credit House Grant and \$3 million for the Student Success Grant. The total \$10 million reduction brings community college funding to \$3 million below last year and represents a 1% reduction in state support. Community colleges retained \$7.2 million for Illinois Veterans Grants, which are not part of the regular community college system budget.

ICCTA president Kathy Wessel is coordinating efforts with the Illinois Presidents Council's president, Terry Bruce, to develop a consistent message to deliver at each of the hearings. They are also working to schedule community college presidents and trustees to testify at the various hearings.

Please review the attached schedule for locations and times. We will be pursuing the goal of having community college presidents and trustees testify at all of the hearings.

**** For additional legislative updates, call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282 ****

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Regional Budget Hearings

REGION	DATE	LOCATION	TIME
Decatur	9/12/2007	Decatur Civic Center City Council Chambers, 3rd Flr 1 Gary K Anderson Plaza Decatur, IL	6:00 p.m.
Marion	9/12/2007	John A. Logan College Crisp Room Carterville, IL	7:00 p.m.
Kankakee	9/12/2007	Kankakee Community College Auditorium Kankakee, IL	6:30 p.m.
Tazewell County	9/13/2007	Pekin Public Library Community Room 301 S. 4th St. Pekin, IL	6:00 p.m.
Champaign	9/17/2007	Anita Purves Nature Center 1505 N. Broadway Urbana, IL	6:00 p.m.
Hoffman Estates	9/18/2007	Hoffman Estates Village Hall Cafeteria 1900 Hassell Road Hoffman Estates, IL	6:00 p.m.
Aurora	9/19/2007	Phillips Park Visitors Center 1000 Ray Moses Drive Aurora, IL	6:00 p.m.
McHenry County	9/19/2007	McHenry College Conference Center 8900 US Highway 14 Crystal Lake, IL	6:00 p.m.
Cicero	9/20/2007	Clyde Park District 1909 S. Laramie Cicero, IL	7:00 p.m.
Rockford	9/20/2007	Zeke Giorgi Building Auditorium 200 S. Wyman Rockford, IL	6:00 p.m.
Joliet	9/24/2007	Joliet Township High School West Campus 401 North Larkin Joliet, IL	6:00 p.m.

Regional Budget Hearings

REGION	DATE	LOCATION	TIME
Rock Island	9/24/2007	County Building 3rd Floor, County Board Room 1548 3rd Avenue Rock Island, IL	6:00 p.m.
North Suburbs	9/25/2007	Northbrook Village Hall City Council Chambers 1225 Cedar Lane Northbrook, IL	4:00 p.m.
South Suburbs	9/25/2007	Homewood-Flossmoor High School Auditorium 999 Kedzie Ave. Flossmoor, IL 60422	6:00 p.m.
Chicago: South	9/26/2007	Kennedy-King College Theatre 6301 S. Halsted St. Chicago, IL 60621	6:30 p.m.
Chicago: West	9/26/2007	Austin Town Hall Auditorium 5610 W. Lake St. Chicago, IL 60644	6:00 p.m.
LaSalle County	9/26/2007	Illinois Valley Community College Cultural Center Theatre 815 North Orlando Smith Ave. Oglesby, IL 61348	6:00 p.m.
Chicago: North	9/27/2007	Loyola University Mundelein Center Auditorium 1020 W. Sheridan Rd. Chicago, IL	7:00 p.m.
Chicago: Southwest	9/27/2007	Oak View Community Center 4625 W. 110th St. Oak Lawn, IL	7:00 p.m.

Illinois Community College Trustees Association **Action Alert**

October 5, 2007

The Illinois General Assembly adjourned Thursday and completed the first week of the fall 2007 veto session. Both houses will return to Springfield on Wednesday, October 10, to continue with the second and final week of veto session.

FY08 Budget

The primary purpose of the veto session is to allow the General Assembly to respond to the Governor's vetoes, amendatory vetoes, and budget-related vetoes. In order for the Governor's veto to be rejected on any legislation, both houses of the General Assembly must vote to override the Governor's veto. A three-fifths majority vote is required in each house to successfully override a governor's veto on most bills. Overriding some budget vetoes may require a simple majority vote in each house. If only one house votes to override a veto and the second house does not vote to override, the Governor's veto stands.

The first order of business for the Illinois House was to override the Governor's item vetoes and item reduction vetoes to the Fiscal Year 2008 budget. The House voted in three separate motions to override the Governor's budget vetoes. House actions included restoration of \$10 million for community colleges that was cut by the Governor. On most votes in the House, four Democrat legislators voted not to override vetoes in support of the Governor.

The House's FY 2008 budget votes have now been sent to the Senate for consideration. The Senate must vote to override the Governor's vetoes using the same motions that were voted upon the House.

Local Control and the Ethics Act

Gov. Blagojevich's veto of **House Bill 3504** (which clarifies that community colleges are units of local government and are not under the jurisdiction of the State Inspector General) was **NOT** overridden. HB 3504's sponsor, Rep. Kurt Granberg, was one of the four lawmakers who consistently voted against overriding the Governor's vetoes and did not file a motion to override.

With the failure of the House to override the HB 3504 veto, the Governor's veto stands. Under the provisions of the Illinois Constitution, time has expired and **there are no remaining options to override this bill.**

Local Control Court Proceedings

ICCTA was recently informed that, in addition to filing an appeal to a recent circuit court decision favoring community colleges, the Illinois Inspector General has filed a motion with the Second Appellate Court requesting a Stay of the lower court's decision. The Appellate Court could rule on the motion to stay the decision within the next few weeks. A decision on the appeal of the lower court's decision could be handed down within the next 9 to 12 months.

*** For additional legislative updates, call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282 ***

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Illinois Community College Trustees Association **Action Alert**

October 15, 2007

The Illinois General Assembly adjourned last Friday after concluding its fall 2007 veto session. Neither the House nor the Senate are scheduled to return to Springfield for the remainder of this calendar year. Gov. Rod Blagojevich, however, has demanded that legislators return to Springfield and pass a version of Cook County property tax assessment cap legislation that he prefers. The Governor has said that if the legislature ignores his demands, he "intends to call them into special session sometime by mid-December to get it done." Legislative leaders have not scheduled the next time for the General Assembly to meet.

Although lawmakers overrode many of the Governor's vetoes, FY 08 budget vetoes were not among them. The House did override the Governor's vetoes and attempted to restore funding that was reduced. The Senate, however, did not override most of the Governor's budget vetoes, thus leaving most of the vetoes intact. The Senate indicated the possibility of proposing an additional supplemental appropriation to fund the vetoed items later in the fiscal year.

During the fall 2007 veto session, several issues of interest **did not occur**:

- \$10 million vetoed from community college funding was not restored
- No capital appropriation bill was approved or advanced
- No funding source for capital appropriations was developed. Gaming positions and new casino licenses were not approved.

ICCTA will keep you informed about legislative developments as they occur.

**** For additional legislative updates, call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282 ****

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Illinois Community College Trustees Association **Action Alert**

October 2, 2007

The Illinois General Assembly returned to Springfield today to convene the first day of the fall 2007 veto session.

House overrides Governor's budget vetoes

In the House of Representatives, the first order of business was to override Gov. Rod Blagojevich's line-item vetoes and reductions of the Fiscal Year 2008 budget. State representatives voted in two separate motions (by votes of 104-4 and 105-4) to override the vetoes, restoring **\$10 million in community college funding** that had been cut by the Governor.

In order for the funding cuts to be restored, the Illinois Senate must also vote to override the Governor's budget vetoes.

House members reported that more than 4,500 persons attended the 19 House-sponsored budget hearings conducted throughout Illinois during the month of September. Approximately 900 witnesses provided testimony at the hearings about the numerous negative impacts of the Governor's budget vetoes on colleges, social services, and public safety issues.

ICCTA seeks override of HB 3504 veto

As of 3:30 PM today, both the House and Senate are approving the override of certain vetoes. ICCTA is seeking to override the Governor's veto of **HOUSE BILL 3504**, legislation that would clarify that community colleges are units of local government that are covered under the local government provisions of the State Government Employees and Officers Act.

At this time, the sponsor of HB 3504, Rep. Kurt Granberg, has **NOT** filed a motion to override the Governor's veto.

ACTION NEEDED:

Please contact your STATE REPRESENTATIVES within the next 24 hours and request that they encourage Rep. Kurt Granberg to file a motion to override the Governor's veto on HB 3504.

ICCTA will keep you informed as the veto session progresses. The veto sessions is currently scheduled for October 2, 3, 4, 10, 11 and 12.

*** For additional legislative updates, call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282 ***

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ICCTA ACTION ALERT

January 12, 2007

SPRING 2007 LEGISLATIVE SESSION BEGINS

The 94th Illinois General Assembly adjourned for the final time on Tuesday, January 9, 2007. On January 10, the new legislators who were elected last November were seated and the 95th General Assembly was sworn in. Both the House and the Senate began the process of organizing and re-elected Michael Madigan as Speaker of the House and Emil Jones as Senate President. Both chambers will complete their respective organizational processes upon their return to Springfield in late January and early February.

The Illinois Senate Democrats begin the new two-year legislative session with an five-member increase in the size of their majority (37 Democrats compared to 22 Republicans). Because they now have a “veto proof” majority, Senate Democrats will enjoy a dramatic increase in their role and influence on the legislative process. House Democrats increased their majority by one member, seating 66 Democrats compared to 52 Republicans in the minority.

Both houses now begin the process of starting the 95th General Assembly. All bills that existed in the past are now dead, and the filing of new bills will begin with Senate Bill 1 and House Bill 1. New committee chairs and minority spokespersons will soon be named and the session will be under way.

The Governor and all other elected constitutional officers were sworn in on January 8 for their new four-year terms. All constitutional offices are now occupied by Democrats.

The House returns to Springfield on January 31 for one day of business. Both houses return to Springfield on February 6 to continue the business of the 95th General Assembly.

■ **For additional legislative updates, call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282** ■



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ICCTA ACTION ALERT

December 2007

2007 YEAR-END UPDATE

Gov. Blagojevich has called another special legislative session of the Illinois General Assembly to begin on January 2, 2008. For the past several weeks, there were indications that the Governor might call lawmakers back to Springfield for a special session before Christmas to address mass transit funding in the Chicago area. The Illinois House had already scheduled a regular session for the week before Christmas, but the Speaker cancelled the session. The Illinois Senate was not scheduled to convene.

The next regularly scheduled time for lawmakers to return to Springfield is January 9 and 10, 2008. However, many observers predict that not much activity will occur before the February 5 primary elections take place. Beginning January 1, a simple majority of the voting membership is required to approve most legislation, down from the current requirement for a 3/5 majority vote to pass bills. Because of the lesser voting requirement beginning January 1, controversial issues become easier to pass – partially because Republicans in each chamber are the minority parties and are no longer able to prevent passage of bills without their votes.

If the General Assembly does not return to Springfield before the end of the year, December will become the first month in 2007 that a session was not convened. According to the General Assembly web site, the Illinois House of Representatives records show that in calendar year 2007, that chamber was involved in legislative activity for 289 session days. By comparison, in calendar year 2006 the House reported legislative activity for 67 legislative session days. (It should be noted that it is possible for more than one session day to occur on a single calendar day when special sessions are called.)

PENDING LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Currently there are complicated negotiations occurring in state government, primarily focused on the major issues of: 1) mass transit funding in the Chicago area; 2) a statewide capital building program; and 3) gaming expansion to fund issues #1 and #2. In addition, the current year budget has not yet been fully resolved even as the state passes through the halfway point in its fiscal year. All of these issues are tied together in a way that will require agreements with all parties on all issues to be reached at the same time in order to gain approval on any of the issues.

State law requires the Governor to submit his FY 2009 budget to the General Assembly in mid-February, even while talks continue in efforts to resolve outstanding issues from the current year budget. Community colleges sustained a \$3 million (or 1%) reduction in state funding below last year's funding level after the Governor vetoed funds from the state budget. ICCTA, the Presidents Council and other community college supporters will be seeking new funding initiatives in the FY 09 state budget cycle.

- CONTINUED -



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PENDING LAWSUITS

While talks continue regarding a variety of major issues, several lawsuits of interest have been filed:

- Last week the Illinois Jobs Coalition filed a lawsuit against the Blagojevich administration in Sangamon County and Cook County for implementing a health insurance program without statutory authority required under the Illinois Constitution to create such a program. The suit says that the Governor vetoed nearly a half a billion dollars from the state budget, which he now seeks to spend to initiate a universal state-paid health insurance program. The General Assembly did not approve creation of a new health insurance program, nor did it appropriate funds for the program. Cook County Court will be the venue for the lawsuit.
- A lawsuit that the Governor filed against the Speaker of the House last fall in Sangamon County Circuit Court continues to generate attention. Gov. Blagojevich filed the lawsuit alleging that Speaker Michael Madigan did not convene Special Sessions at the specific time that the Governor scheduled. The Governor had called a special session for a specific Saturday at 4:00 pm; Speaker Madigan convened the Special Session on that Saturday but at 10:00 am. The lawsuit claims that the Governor may set the time and date for the General Assembly to meet -- not just the date.
- Another Blagojevich-initiated lawsuit (filed against the Clerk of the Illinois House for allegedly following the directions of the Speaker of the House) recently was dismissed by a Sangamon County judge.
- The Illinois Community College Trustees Association continues to coordinate a lawsuit brought by 35 community college districts against the Illinois Executive Inspector General's office. The suit argued that community college districts are units of local government and therefore are not covered under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Executive Inspector General's Office for purposes of the State Ethics Act. The Illinois Executive Inspector General's office had been enforcing an Attorney General's opinion that community college districts and its employees are to be considered state employees for purposes of the Ethics Act.

This past fall a DuPage County Court ruled in favor of the community colleges. The DuPage opinion prohibits any Illinois Executive Inspector General jurisdiction over those community colleges listed as plaintiffs and considers community college districts to be units of local government subject to the local government provisions of the Ethics Act. The Illinois Executive Inspector General has appealed the DuPage ruling to the 2nd Appellate Court. A decision from the Appellate Court on the issue of a "stay" of the DuPage County Court ruling could come at anytime. A decision regarding the ruling of the DuPage County Court will likely take many months to reach.

**** For additional updates, call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282 ****