

ILLINOIS AFL - CIO

NEWS UPDATE - 04/10/17

The Illinois General Assembly will now take a two week break for members to return to their district and families. They will return in the last week of April, when both chambers will have one week to pass their bills over to the other chamber for consideration.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

House Democrats Pass a “Lifeline” Budget

\$15 Minimum Wage Passes Labor Committee

Representative Guzzardi led the charge for a \$15 minimum wage in Illinois last Wednesday. HB 198 passed 17-6 in the House Labor Committee. Under the provisions of the bill, the state minimum wage would increase in increments from its current rate of \$8.25 per hour:

- Beginning of 2018 – increase to \$9 per hour.
- 2019 - \$10 per hour.
- 2020 - \$11.25 per hour.
- 2021 - \$13 per hour.
- 2022 - \$15 per hour

Michael Carrigan, President Illinois AFL-CIO, issued this statement regarding the passage of the bill: “It has been seven years since our state’s minimum wage has increased. In that time these workers have seen the cost of their groceries, heating, and daycare bills go up. These workers deserve a raise, and it will help Illinois’ economy.”

The legislation also calls for a small business tax credit (for those who employ 50 employees or less) for those businesses that employ minimum wage workers.

Due to Governor Rauner’s inability to do his job, or pass a balanced budget – the Illinois House was forced to find funds to appropriate to human service agencies and for higher education. The House passed **HB 109** (G. Harris) this week by a vote of 64-45-1. It now goes to the Senate for consideration when they return.

The Illinois House and Senate have sent many separate budget bills to Governor Rauner since his inauguration. Governor Rauner has vetoed 22 budget bills, taking from our state’s most vulnerable.

HB 109 would provide over \$800 million dollars to higher education and social services. The funds would come from two special state funds, that House Democrats believe have been sitting idle. Here is how the funding breaks down:

- \$559 million, would go toward funding higher education.
- Community colleges and universities would receive funding as well, including \$50 million for career and technical education.
- Eastern Illinois University would receive \$5.6 million, and
- University of Illinois would receive \$85.4 million.
- Lincoln’s Challenge Academy in Rantoul would also receive \$61,600.
- \$258 million, would go toward funding social service programs.
- A pilot program for Opioid Dependents, would receive \$176,600 in funding, while addiction treatments.
- Medicaid eligible and special population, would receive a combined total of \$14.8 million.
- Independent living centers would get \$1.5 million.
- Domestic violence shelters would receive \$6.5 million.
- The U of I Sickle Cell Clinic would receive \$170,900.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Bill to Block Nurse Privatization Goes to Governor's Desk

SB 19 (McCann/Costello) passed the House last week with bi-partisan support, 68-42. The legislation restricts the Illinois Department of Corrections' ability to eliminate the approximately 124 nurses who currently provide these critical services by bringing in private vendors to perform the work currently being provided by state employees.

Governor Rauner announced the layoff of 124 nurses about ten days ago to save \$8 million.

This bill seeks to establish the policy that further expansion of privatization of medical and mental health services is not in the best interest of the state. State employees are an essential part of providing adequate medical and mental health care to inmates.

The bill was transmitted to the Governor for his consideration on Friday.

Pritzker Announces For Governor

As had been expected for weeks, businessman J.B. Pritzker officially announced his campaign for Governor Thursday.

Pritzker, a Chicago Democrat, has been traveling the state in recent weeks and made his announcement on the South Side of Chicago. Pritzker is the founder of the Pritzker Group, a venture capital firm that focuses on the technology sector.

He previously served as chairman of the Illinois Human Rights Commission and is an advocate for early childhood education. Pritzker joins announced Democratic candidates Chris Kennedy, son of former U.S. Senator Robert Kennedy; State Senator Daniel Biss; Chicago Alderman Ameya Pawar; and Madison County Regional Superintendent of Schools Robert Daiber.

City Pension Bill Moves Again

SB 14 (SP Cullerton/Currie) passed House Pensions Committee last week by a vote of 8-6-0. It will go to the House floor for consideration. The Governor recently vetoed SB 2437 from the 99th General Assembly, which was identical to **SB 14**.

Under the provisions of **SB 14**, city taxpayers would contribute toward the pension plan through a city and water tax increase. Without the passage of this legislation, the Municipal Employees Pension Fund is left with a gaping hole in 2023, even with the tax on utilities. The legislation is seeking a 90% funding level over a 40 year period for the pension funds.

Last September, the Chicago City Council approved a tax on water and sewer bills to save the Municipal Employees pension fund. However, the Illinois General Assembly still needs to sign off on employee concessions tied to the funding schedule.

The City Council also approved a tax on monthly telephone bills to fund the laborers' pension fund as well.

The bill increases the payroll contributions for participants of both pension funds hired after January 1st, 2017, to 11.5% from 8.5%, and reduces their age of eligibility for full benefits to 65 from 67. Employees hired on or after Jan. 1, 2011, will have the option of increasing their payroll contributions to 11.5% from 8.5% in return for their retirement age being reduced to 65 from 67. There would be no changes for employees hired prior to 2011.

10th Annual
Illinois AFL-CIO COPE Golf Outing
 The Rail Golf Course
 1400 S. Club House Drive, Springfield, IL
Monday, June 5, 2017
 1 PM Shotgun Start / 6 PM Dinner
 Details coming soon

IL AFL-CIO and Chicago Cook County Building Trades host annual “Lobby on the Hill” in Washington DC

The North American Building Trades Unions (NABTU) held their 2017 Legislative Conference in Washington this past week. The theme of the Conference was ‘We Build... Opportunity. Partnerships. Pathways’.

In his keynote address, NABTU President Sean McGarvey reminded the delegates of the political make-up in Washington DC and that the Trump Administration as well as both political parties in Congress supported making up to \$1 trillion investment in America’s infrastructure. McGarvey emphasized that the Building Trades Unions would support these initiatives and would help pass infrastructure improvement legislation if the Prevailing Wage under the Davis-Bacon Act was preserved and enforced.

Speakers delivering remarks to the delegates supporting Building Trades initiatives included Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer, (NY), Congressman Tim Ryan (OH-13), Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, Cedric Richmond (LA-2) and Governor Larry Hogan (R-MD) along with several others public and industry officials

President Donald Trump also addressed the delegates. In his remarks Trump unfortunately failed to fully detail his infrastructure program or endorse the Prevailing Wage under Davis Bacon on publicly funded projects.

On Tuesday, over 70 delegates from Illinois met with Illinois Congressional members. Meeting with delegates were Senator Richard Durbin, Senator Tammy Duckworth, Congresswoman Cheri Bustos (D-17), Congressman Mike Quigley (D-5), Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-8), Congressman Bill Foster (D-11), Congresswoman Jan Schkowsky (D-9), Congressman Dan Lipinski (D-3) and Congressman Brad Schneider (D-10). In a separate meeting, Congressman Rodney Davis (R-13), Congressman Darin LaHood (R-18), Congressman Mike Bost (R-12), Congressman John Shimkus (R-15) and Congressman Adam Kinzinger (R-16) met with delegates to discuss the importance of Prevailing Wage on public projects and the harmful effects of Right to Work.



United States Senator Tammy Duckworth speaking to delegates attending the North American Building Trades Unions annual Legislative Conference. Senator Duckworth discussed unfair trades deals, the disastrous Republican attempt to repeal the Affordable Care Act (Obama Care) and her support of the Prevailing Wage for publically funded infrastructure projects. Pictured with Senator Duckworth, IL AFL-CIO President Michael T. Carrigan (R) and Chicago & Cook County Building Trades Secretary Treasurer Mike Macellaio (L).



During the Illinois “Lobby Day on the Hill” meeting, President of the Iron Workers International Union Eric Dean (middle left) discussing a badly needed infrastructure project on the South Side of Chicago with Iron Workers 63 Business Agent Paul Thompson (far left) and Congressman Dan Lipinski (D-3) (middle right) with his Chief of Staff Eric Lauston.

GOP Rigs Rules; Votes Gorsuch To Supreme Court

The U.S. Senate, confirmed President Donald Trump's nominee to the Supreme Court 54-45 on Monday after making a historic change to Senate rules changing the threshold from 60 votes to a simple majority of 51.

The Senate Democrats had the votes to hold a filibuster – assuring that 60 votes would be needed to confirm Gorsuch. In response – and for the first time in Senate history – Republicans changed the rules to make a simple majority break the filibuster and proceed with the confirmation.

Gorsuch, whose decisions have shown a clear preference toward corporations in cases involving workers, was opposed by the AFL-CIO. His confirmation to the court is viewed by pundits as swinging the court toward a conservative majority. He replaces the late Antonin Scalia, who died more than a year ago, but the GOP-controlled Senate refused to hold hearings on President Barack Obama's appointee Merrick Garland.

Labor Endorsed Candidates Score Wins In Local Elections

AFL-CIO endorsed local candidates scored wins in Tuesday's elections.

Victories in mayoral races included:

- Rockford – Tom McNamara
- Kankakee – Chasity Wells-Armstrong
- East Moline – Reggie Freeman
- Bloomington – Tari Renner
- Normal – Chris Koos leads by seven votes with 35 absentees to be counted
- Decatur – Julie Moore Wolfe
- Belleville – Mark Eckert

In other victories for Labor-backed candidates, Jan Quillman and Mike Turk were re-elected to the Joliet City Council; Sean Allen won his race for Lisle Township Trustee; Bob Bruno was top vote-getter in his race for School Board in Glen Ellyn; Labor-backed school board candidates won in District 211 (Schaumburg-Palatine); Jim Underwood led all candidates for Richland Community College Board; Amy Rueff was top vote-getter in race for Decatur Township Trustee; Kristen DiCenso won an open seat election for Ward 6 in Springfield; Lakeisha Purchase led the way in the race for Capital Township Trustee; and Diana Carlile won election as Chatham Township Trustee.

Illinois Pipefitter named Executive Director of Union Veteran Council



Will Attig

AFGE International President and Union Veterans Council Chair, J. David Cox, Sr., recently announced the appointment of Will Attig as Executive Director of the AFL-CIO Union Veterans Council. Attig is a member of UA Local 160 in Murphysboro and worked as a Zone Coordinator in the AFL-CIO Labor 2016 Political Program. As a member of UA Local 160,

Attig worked with Illinois legislators to create a Veterans Suicide Task Force. The legislation creating the task force became a model program for lawmakers nationwide.

Attig is a combat veteran of the Iraqi war where he served with the 1-26th Infantry, one of the most decorated units of the Iraqi war. After returning home, Attig attended a veteran welding program with the Helmets to Hard Hats program in 2010. After completing the program he went on to become an apprentice with UA Local 160 Plumbers & Pipefitters in Southern Illinois. He received his Journeyman's card in 2016.

Will Fischer, the former Executive Director of the Union Veterans Council, was appointed Director of Governmental Affairs with VoteVets.Org in February.

The AFL-CIO Union Veterans Council advocates for veterans on working class veteran related issues in the area of the need for good jobs and a strong fully funded and staffed Veterans Administration (VA).

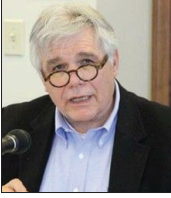
REMINDER

WORKER MEMORIAL DAY - APRIL 28, 2017

Call 217.544.4014 For More Information On These And Other Issues Important To Working People - www.ilaf-cio.org



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What is the BlueGreen Alliance?

*By Dick Breckenridge, BlueGreen Alliance Regional
Program Manager for Illinois*

The BlueGreen Alliance unites America's largest labor unions and its most influential environmental organizations to solve today's environmental challenges in ways that create and maintain quality jobs and build a stronger, fairer economy.

We are guided by the principle that we can no longer choose between good jobs and a clean environment—that the actions we take to create quality jobs and to protect working people and the environment must go hand-in-hand, and that together, we will build a clean, thriving and fair economy.

My job as the Regional Program Manager takes me around the state working with union and environmental leaders on issues that matter to us all.

In Illinois, we helped push for the passage of the Future Energy Jobs Bill. It will move the state forward in its efforts to grow clean energy and energy efficiency, while protecting the jobs of workers around the state. The bill will fix the state's RPS and increase investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency—including investments low-income communities.

We also work on water quality issues. As we've seen in Flint, Mich., and in cities around the country—including Chicago, Highland Park, Galesburg and many other in Illinois and around our nation—that isn't always the case. There is lead in the water of many cities, schools and homes. And it is something we need to solve now, not later. We supported Senate Bill 550—a step forward in the fight for clean, safe water. This bill will also protect schoolchildren from lead poisoning by requiring testing of all drinking fountains and other sources of drinking water in our schools. These are strong first steps, and combined with action from local, state and federal leaders, it will begin to help Illinois reduce the potential of lead exposure in our water and good middle-class jobs can be created and sustained cleaning up this mess.

But Illinois' infrastructure problems go beyond just our water: our entire infrastructure is in dire need of repair. At the local, state and federal level we are working to find ways to fund these needed repairs using American-made materials and with provisions that ensure the jobs created are good, union jobs. It isn't enough to just fix the problems with our infrastructure systems; we need to do it the right way.

If you're interested in finding out more about the BlueGreen Alliance and our work in Illinois and around the country, visit www.bluegreenalliance.org.